

CASTLE OF  
FRANKENSTEIN



FILMS  
& TV

JUNE

Andy Warhol's Frankenstein/Mel Brooks' Frankenstein

K

Castle  
of

# FRANKENSTEIN

85¢

No.  
25

SPECIAL-TIME MACHINE'S  
CREATOR  
GEORGE PAL

PHANTOM  
OF THE  
PARADISE

"THE  
TEXAS  
CHAINSAW  
MASSACRE"

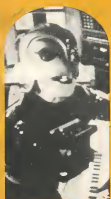
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Massacre**



**Andy Warhol's  
Dracula &  
Frankenstein**



**The Genius  
Of  
George Pal**

Castle  
of

# FRANKENSTEIN

## CONTENTS

No. 25 / June

THE WORLD'S LEADING SF/Fantasy Film Magazine

- 4. Letters** ... Fantasy and other topical debates, film reviews, Comic commentaries, and sundry celestial vibes by the readers.
- 5. The Texas Chainsaw Massacre** ... Where life's crunch grinds down to the very marrow.
- 10. Andy Warhol's  
Oracula & Frankenstein** ... Underground filmmaking genius ventures way above ground with two controversial adaptations based on genre choices.
- 17. Monster Star** ... Caught inside an "Unknown" horror star, Ed Parker, who doubled in spades for greats like Karloff and Cussey Jr.
- 22. Phantom Of The Paradise** ... Rock'n Roll goes all out in a masterful takeoff on THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA.
- 27. Mel Brooks' Frankenstein** ... The creative power behind THE PRODUCERS and BLAZING SADDLES works over Franko who'll never be quite the same again.
- 34. The Genius Of George Pal** ... Behind the scenes with one of the greatest of all SF/fantasy filmmakers.
- 43. The Night Stalker** ... About the TV Horror Hit— plus interviews with Darren McGavin and the original NIGHT STALKER himself, Barry Atwater.
- 48. Star Gazing** ... A Special Request All-Star Album of SF/fantasy Celebrity favorites.
- 53. Frankenstein At Large** ... REVIEWS: Theatrical & Screen Films... BOOKS AND MUSIC... DRAMA... Miscellany... And a preview of the next issue.
- 66. Gallery Ghouls** ... CoP's FREE ADS Dept.— Rules: It's only open to readers of CoP (no pros)... Naturally.



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FRONT COVER: Utilizing the special CoFarens Dimensional Hyperfold Cover technique, artist Marcus Boas recreates the great mood of an immortal SF/fantasy film classic: George Pal's THE TIME MACHINE.

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# THE CASTLE Mail Box



## MUTTERINGS FROM THE MOVIE MAUSOLEUM

### ITEM FILM CRITIC "EXPOSE"

At last, many have come to a justifiable conclusion that most Establishment critics are unworthy of their calling or, alternatively, Obviously, then, this may explain why so many films they detect are the ones you admire, and why films they had hoped would bomb like 2001 and EXORCIST turned into acclaimed hits.

Suspicion exists—and much of it is well founded—that most of the "class" critics, being frustrated filmmakers, harbor deep-seated resentment stemming from passionate envy. Many less recognized reviewers have no grounding in the arts nor the least understanding of filmmaking technique; and they continue to prove it to their blabbering. While some knowledge and sense for art is all that an intelligent cineist requires to share and rise above the dung heap, cultural spending is of no use to a "kritic," a total borehead.

Imaginative sensitivity is fundamentally the sole basis for forming a rational and honest appreciation of imagination. It cannot be justified by years of specialized training nor through a long array of degrees and doctorates. Even parrots and sound tapes collect information.

Not all "noise" critics follow the same pattern, of course, whether you like them or not. Many come from different backgrounds. Some may mean they're former S & M buxers, or held down at one time prison guard jobs, and I know of one character who believes that Martin Bormann is alive and will doing a film volume in New York. Some critics, who may never become Agents or Bogdanoviches, do their thing year in and year out, and probably they mean well, but never improve; they've decided themselves into believing that they've attained a deranged status that their film essays reveal more of themselves than about film. And . . . they'll burn everyone to tears to prove their exotic "erudition" and monolithic obtuseness.

Some of the exalted "whore" get even fussier and often snarl the more they pontificate.

So, you're still wondering how "they" get their Reg Jobs, eh? For the answer to this burning question, we go for the first

(continued on page 59)

## RE: CORMAN & KIM NOVAK

Dear CTR: Issues devoted solely to new releases should be avoided. I'd enjoy seeing more recognition given "forgotten" films of merit, as with Abba Hertz's NOE OF THIS EARTH (CoF 231) retrospective. Though a bit awkwardly written, it made some good points. I am especially intrigued by Hertz's notion of the alien vampires "becoming" the imploding Cadillac. It is among the best of Roger Corman's early efforts, along with the darkly amusing WASP WOMAN, the flawed but clever CREATURE FROM THE HAUNTED SEA, and the absolutely brilliant THE LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS, one of Corman's finest efforts. Does anyone have any current information and/or career background for Paul Smith? He must be about 65 by now.

Though not starting or even especially clever, I enjoyed TALES THAT WITNESS MADNESS, primarily because of the fantastic faces and nice performances. It's Kim Novak's first theatrical film since the horrendous THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY in 1959, and she does look lovely. She's in a rather odd position in that her carefully built-up career was very quickly ruined by idiot casting decisions that put her in roles way beyond her depth, or in her hands dumped on her for years in spite of the fact she can act (see especially VERTIGO and MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT), and now she's led down as far as major producers are concerned. Her 1973 TV film, THE THIRD GIRL FROM THE LEFT, is amusing because, as an "aging" chorus girl, she's infinitely more attractive than the naive maiden she's supposed to be outwitted by. At any rate, Novak is, as your reviewer points out, not yet ready for "mother" roles.

As pertains, I'll recommend that the magistrates in the audience pick up "Judith Crist's TV Guide to the Movies." Her arguments (especially toward SF/horror/fantasy films) are terribly aggravating. But have pity, for anyone who can seriously call THE WILD BUNCH "The worst movie of 1969" is hopelessly befuddled.

David Hooper, 6460 Center St., Montreal, Quebec H4C 6C2.

## THE ANIMATORS

Dear CTR: After having thoroughly read all three issues of CoF dealing with Ray Harryhausen (CoF 19, 20, 21), I have suddenly realized what great potential your mag has for presenting the animation/fantasy medium. More articles on Harryhausen and his firm would be in order and coverage on Jim Danforth would really prove interesting. I have admired and appreciated the field of animation for the past ten years. Your publication, above all others, has dealt with this aspect of fantasy films most intelligently. Best wishes towards your future issues.

Maxwell Kneeshel, 452 Pacific Ave., Winnipeg, Man., Canada.

## THE LATE JOHN JORDAN

Dear CTR: As an SF/horror/fantasy fan nearly 20 years, I've been especially incensed in the Bond films. Therefore, I am a rather careful reader of CoF since it occasionally concerns itself with news on Bond. In your "TV Menagerie" in CoF 21 for ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE, you state "John Jordan," a lost his life while photographing the film's spectacular aerial takes." According to my references, Mr. Jordan was killed while working on CATCH 22. He lost a leg during the filming of YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE in 1967.

Steve Schneider, 36 Birdseye, Morning Glory Lane, Merthyr, Pa. 17545.

— You must be right, but the info listed came from a UA featurette on "the making" of ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE — CTR

Dear CTR: Also, TV censorship is getting worse. When I saw THUNDERBALL on TV, it was butchered beyond belief. You may recall the steam-room sequence, well, you see Bond lead the woman in, but then it's cut. But damned were censored! I could've cried right there. Thank God I saw it originally in a theater. By the way, you should cover all those classic Bond films, especially THUNDERBALL—despite a whole issue to them. The TV version of Dr. No's financial was fabulous. Meanwhile, I hope something will be done about TV censorship.

I agree with you on the issue of comics 95% of them are trash.

Al Gray, 2078 St. Raymond's Ave., Bronx, N.Y. 10467.

— Only answer we'd get unanswered, free access to TV transmissions, news, etc., is when they crack down on the greatest police of the broadcast: FCC, to a great degree abetted by the sponsor/stimulus of the TV industry (what else can you call it when it refers exclusively on the auspicious Nielsen Ratings). Cable TV, of course, is one answer (and easily available), but wider restrictions because of "special interest" groups that prevent it from expanding in most areas. A few sections in NYC already have it—It's very cheap, about \$25 for installation, \$6 to \$8 a month for maintenance, and totally access free, once only months old or and playing in America. Cable TV's also shown full nudity, real adult stuff, controversial issues (not commercial TV won't "show" those, etc. Another advantage to Cable most people don't know of (apart from several extra channels) is that every regular TV station can be viewed in without need of outside antennas (the standard ghosts and interference. Once Free Enterprise and democracy come back again (if we live to see the day), Cable and a lot of other great benefits will be easily available — CTR

(recovered on page 59)



# THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE



Previous page: Genina Hansen in "Leatherface." Above: Tom McMan (as Pain) in a title of dismembered horrors. Right: part of the cast gathered together for a sentimental "family" group shot—a real bunch of jovial cut-ups who believe in keeping their movie close to the grindhouse.

#### THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

is one more step up the rung of excruciating-filmic horror, with the accent on bludgeoning, terrifying "FearOrama" calculated to try and make you fall out of your theater seat. "God, help us all! When will all this violence, horror and killing end?" voiced an impressionable member of the audience. "NEVER," I replied. "I hope!" rebutted the house's manager, gloating over his boxoffice profits.

Whatever you do, you are heavily cautioned not to see THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE—otherwise, you should proceed "at your own risk," as some of the early horror film blarney used to say. Not that it's a failure; indeed, it succeeds too well at what it sets out to do. This movie extends the boundaries of cinematic terror and revelation to the point where we are now forced to redefine the term "horror film."

I consider myself a hardened observer of horror films, yet this one shocked me to a pale and quaking bulk. We can check our tongue all we want about sadism, violence, exploitation; yet we can't deny it takes talent to make a film so frightening that it practically has us peeing in our pants. We can wag a finger at the hairy acting so common to these shockers of the raw-head-and-bloody-bones variety. We can shake our heads in disbelief at the ads and prologue which claim that the plot is based on an actual incident. While they unfold, however, we are com-

pled to believe that the disgusting events on-screen are really taking place. We give the tale our credence to the same extent that we believe a nightmare while we're asleep. In light of its accomplishments, this movie-pic can be called neither tacky nor sloppy.

This production was perpetrated by a group of Texas film students who apparently saw NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD and duly absorbed its contents. Considering the subject matter, MASSACRE is not gratuitously gory, yet it never fails to convey the physical impact of the savage crimes it portrays.

There's no shortage of suspenseful atmospheres, either. The film begins with a quintet of young people driving happily down a road, ignore the sun-drenched scenery they pass, however fetchingly it is photographed, the steady counterpoint of baleful news bulletins on the car radio assure us that something bad will fall their kids, and soon. They stop at a gas station; even the soapads are made to look sinister as the attendant washes their windshield. Next they visit an old abandoned homestead. We're certain this thin given habitation isn't as deserted as it looks. Of course, the director has doped us that dilapidated dwelling is probably the safest place. Nearby, however, is a clean-looking farmhouse, all white-washed and with a porch swing out front—this turns out to be the headquarters of a latterday Sweeney Bean. The inhabitants are all slaughterhouse employees who've failed to grasp the distinction that what may be permissible with cattle can't generally be practiced upon people. One of these hapless victims stumbles upon a chamber so

littered with human bones that we might feel inclined to laugh at the overdone gruesomeness of it all. Suspended from the ceiling, however, is a live chicken, squawking and fluttering in a bad cage too small to accommodate it, this leery, incongruous detail supplies precisely the right touch of genuine mortal madness to convince us that what we see is not ridiculous, but all too real. There are other flashes of directorial brilliance: a dense growth of bushes, for example, hides the heroine's panic-stricken flight, but, owing to the weapon of the title, poses no impediment to the progress of her crazed pursuer (Gunnar Hansen). As the girl in distress (to put it mildly), Marilyn Burns is faced with a most strenuous role which requires her to maintain her portrayal of feverish hysteria through the greater part of the film. Hansen's near-supernatural menace is enhanced by a leather mask which he never once removes. It may be an old trick, but it still soars.

There is now no doubt that the advent of films like NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD and THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE—with their no-holds-barred approach to terror (and their roots in PSYCHO)—signals what I think is the emergence of a new school of horror cinema in America. This is not strictly a bad thing, for we can no longer depend upon horror thrillers as the classic tradition to frighten or satisfy as. The disordered cardboard sets of German expressionism, the nebulous shadowland of village Universal, the voluptuous horrors of Hammer, and the cultivated stylizations of the German Poe pics have become overly familiar, if not almost cliché. To the general public these are

the carnards of "horror movies." However, to the dedicated reader of CoF, these same elements convalesce, leave no face at, a richly romantic source of cinematic beauty. Though it may give us a wrong now and then, the traditional horror film is not terrifying, it is pleasantly scary. In its purest form this classic tradition logically culminates in the ladies' Gothic romance, where fear is christened and we are left with the beautiful, sinister accoutrements, washed clean of offending excitement.

The new horror movie is gentler than the old, but this is not its distinguishing characteristic. More dense is a change in emphasis which is reflected in the acting, direction and photography. Illustrating this difference is an example from THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE: a girl's finger is cut, then jammed into the mouth of a seemingly dead old man, who promptly awakes and sucks contentedly, an obscene travesty of a babe at its mother's breast. Now, what precisely are we shown in this scene? A cut finger. Nothing gory about that. We see that every time we have a blood test. We're also shown someone sucking the blood from the finger. We've seen that before, too. Consequently, a Roger Corman or a Terence Fisher could stage this sequence in a manner decadent and erotic. In MASSACRE, however, it strikes a repulsive chord which is profoundly disturbing, it positively transmutes the moviegoers, leaving him giddy on the ropes. We have reached the

polar opposite of the ladies' Gothic; the beauty of its classic form has been drained away and only terror is left. The esthetic of the new horror film is the absence of any esthetic whatsoever. Some may deplore this. It may be argued, however, that it is more moral to portray violent death in all its horror rather than make it look stylized and pretty or, worse yet, funny.

How important are direction and photography to MASSACRE's effectiveness? These are, after all, the components by which the movie holds us in its thrall. They mean everything to it, and yet in the final analysis they mean nothing, just as the film itself ranks among both the best and the worst of the year. All that truly counts is the brutal, sickening, helpless terror we feel. And how is a critic to go about criticizing that?

—Paul Rosen—

\*\*\*

Allegedly based on a true "crime" case, TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE is a gruesome tale of five young people who meet a grisly end at the hands of crazed madmen in an old deserted house. Full credit goes to Tobe Hooper who directed and co-scripted this truly frightening film. Though not quite as gruesome as NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, it's far more stylish and elaborate. TCM's and NOTLED's dramatic styles are rather similar: amateurish and practically nonexistent, except for TCM's femme lead, Man-

lyn Burns—though apparently her first film, she's excellent on all counts and rides ahead in acting compared with Judith O'Dea, as well as being extremely attractive and sexually stimulating. Consequently, it's quite surprising to watch her deteriorate from a beautiful, innocent girl at the film's onset into a hysterical, blood-soaked mess at the conclusion.

Director Hooper knows how to shake up his audience. Each time one of the kids approaches the front door to the evil house, one experiences the same reacting dread felt while watching THE EXORCIST, especially during Regan's bedroom sequences. You just know something terrible was about to happen. And much to our delight, something did!

In TCM one of the boys is stabbed to death; one girl is hung on a meat hook, etc. Finally, so one is left alive except Miss Burns, and now—ready for the big scene.

With his charisma going full blast, the madman with the leather mask chases Miss Burns through the bog in what may be one of the most suspenseful sequences in film history. He runs, then gets close to her, but not close enough, though she's within inches of his reach. Herewith, the frenzied, fantastic pacing and terrific camerawork (Daniel Pearl) puts you right in the center of the action; you actually feel it's all happening...to you—or, at least, that you're right there in those woods, watching it all happen. And, it works, because both times I saw the film the audience took

Left: Gunnar Hansen (Leatherface) giving Teri McMinn her final "treatment." Right: Edwin Neal, a regular S&M freak, is regaling Marilyn Burns about the salubrious qualities of a quaint Charnaw environment.





Left: Gunter Hansen on the warpath after his fleeing victim (right), Marilyn Burns who, quivering in terror, attempts to escape a horrible fate by hiding in the woods by night.



its "super-coolness" to the woad and reacted by screaming "Run . Run . Run!" to the fleeing heroine. Miss Burns is so believable and perfect, everyone wants desperately to help her.

Not all of the film is as perfect since some of the actors speak in heavy provincial drawls that make their lines often unclear or impossible to comprehend. There are also moments of embarrassingly obvious hamminess—the madmen get a little out of hand by chewing up the scenery to shreds, raving, hollering, snoring and screaming like there was no tomorrow, but in spite of several such protracted scenes, you find yourself wondering if this wasn't the way it really was. The film's basic "terror" gets to be all the more gripping when you remind yourself that this is supposed to be based on actual fact... that it did—God, help us!—happen.

Just as NOTLD became a cult favorite, TCM bears all the elements of being the new heir apparent to the *Thrillers of the Week*—looked at, proving once again what humanity has been aware of in the *Watergate* Era: the most horrible monster of all is, at times, man himself.

—Richard Broome—

#### THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

Cast & Credits:

Marilyn Burns, Allen Danziger, Paul Parton, William Vile, Vic McDerm, Edwin Neal, Jim Siedow, Gunter Hansen, John Guare, Jerry Larentz.  
 Exec prod: Jay Purdley Prod & dir: Tobe Hooper. Story/screenplay: Kim Henkel, Tobe Hooper. Cinematography: Dan Pearl. Art dir.: Robert Barr. Makeup: Dorothy Hunt, Willa Marie. Editors: Sallye Richardson, Larry Chisolm. Music score: Tobe Hooper, Wayne Bell.



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Andy Warhol's

# DRACULA



# and Frankenstein





Previous page: Udo Kier as Dracula and Frankenstein. Above: Udo Kier, as the Baron, holds up the head he's just acquired for his male zombie.

ANDY

## WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN

Anyone who has ever read a 3-D comic book cannot fail to appreciate the momentous achievement which Andy Warhol's *FRANKENSTEIN* signifies. Even at the cost of the eyestrain required (a considerable amount), this is a visual adventure of monumental proportions. Each camera set-up is roughly comparable to a single panel in one of those 3-D comics; this means that, with every change of angle, one's eyes need a couple seconds to adjust themselves before spatial depth can be perceived. The pictorial compositions recall the artwork in the E.C. horror comics of the 50's. The lascivious preoccupations of the screenplay, meanwhile, show the influence of underground fannies.

Make no mistake about it—this is a first-rate production. The cinematography is breathtaking, its beauty enhanced by the 3-D process. Of course, as in many another film released under the Warhol aegis, there's no shortage of gay no-no's: practically every chamber in Frankenstein's castle is adorned

with nude male statuary. The Baron himself gets impaled on a fence, his detached gall bladder dangles and drops from the top of this fatal phallic symbol!

The music score is lyrical. The screen play is evocative, but damningly sloppy; reference is made to the impending visit of Frankenstein's parents, moments later the conversation turns to bequests inherited from these folks. Whether they are alive or dead is never made clear.

Udo Kier, who looks maddeningly like Richard Todd, lacks discipline in the title role, but director Paul Morrissey has conceived and written this part along perfectly valid lines. The Baron, you see, has a sex fetish for internal organs; this perversion is merely a logical extension of the scientific person expressed by such unscrupulous surgeons as Colin Clive and Peter Cushing, whose organs are confined to the intellectual sphere.

But this Frankenstein's monster making is inspired by a fascist dream of originating, breeding, and ruling a new master race. Appropriately, his theme music is the Pi-gmire's chorus from Wagner's "Tannhauser" and, like any good Volung, he is married to his own sister. She is portrayed by Monique van Warren in a stately performance of icy precision. Her regal bearing is established in her initial entrance, which finds her riding,

head held high, in an open carriage through a Serbian forest.

Warhol's *FRANKENSTEIN* may be visceral entertainment, but it's not without esthetic justification.

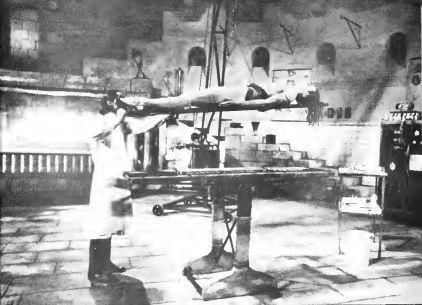
—Paul Roen—

## 2nd Post Mortem

Warhol's *FRANKENSTEIN* was produced in the Robert V. Benrose Arch Oboler Specvision 3-D process. For this reason, SFantasy fans may want to go see the film. There aren't many 3-D books made any more, and if you've never seen one, it's probably worth the torture you'll endure sitting through the vulgar plot just to see the 3-D effects.

Specvision was developed by Robert V. Benrose in association with veteran (Bwana Devil) 3-D producer Arch Oboler at a cost of \$750,000. From all available evidence, the only two previous Specvision productions were *THE BUBBLE* and *ARIGATO*. *BUBBLE* was released in 1966 and later in 1972 (I thought, the people who released *The Stewardess*—it didn't do too well in both releases. *ARIGATO* was filmed in Japan ("Arigato" means "thank you" in Japanese) and yet to be released in the US.

Specvision uses a twin-component premix system to place left and right eye views one-over-the-other on a single 35mm film. A



Med lab time with Udo Kier (Dr. Frankenstein) administering special "treatment" to Daria Di Lazarro. Below: the Baron's creature, played by Srdjan Zelenovic.

similar lens is used in projection, except that each view is polarized in a different direction (45 degrees with respect to one another) to allow the viewer to use the stylized polarized glasses to get the depth effect. These-D films made with a process employing polarized light must be projected onto a metallic screen. For this reason, the distribution of FRANKENSTEIN will be somewhat restricted, since many theaters—especially the newer twin-theaters—don't have metallic screens.

THE BUBBLE had good dimensions on cinematography. FRANKENSTEIN doesn't. Berner was 3-D consultant on both films, so we have only to assume that the makers of FRANKENSTEIN blew it themselves. They did.

In the "version" of Mary Shelley's classic, Dr. Frankenstein creates two monsters—one male, one female—with the intention of making them to produce a new, superior race. The male monster, according to the good Doctor, must be lustful. Since all the male monster lacks is a head, the Doctor and his assistant Otto wait outside a bordello until a good specimen comes along, they then hack off his head and trundle it back tot he lab.

Unknownst to Dr. Frankenstein, he has accidentally acquired the head of a would be monk. Consequently, the experiment fails. That's the story. Oh, there's all sorts of

"wholesome" stuff: sex with the dead, ripping out throats and squashing organs, rape after making an incision with a knife, severed limbs by the dozen. Indeed, this movie is so gonzoque it makes LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT look like Walt Disney stuff.

Director/writer Paul Morrissey's intent is evidently to make a buck, and he probably will. To coin a name from a previous Michael film, FRANKENSTEIN is trash. But, then, what else can be expected from the protégé of a man who copied Campbell's soup cans on canvas and convinced everybody it was art?

—Lough Heston—

#### CREDITS

A Point-to-Point/Rainbow/Russian Production.  
Distributed by Weinstein Pictures (95 min.).  
3-D/Color. Rated X.  
Directed & written by Paul Morrissey. Photography: Luigi Kuveler. Prost-design: Enrico Job. Makeup: Mario De Salvia. Music: Claudio Gizzi (on RCA label). Special: Carlo Marzocchi. Sound: Tex Roberto Arcangel. Baron: Frankenstein. Udo Kier. Baron's wife: Monique van Veenen. Field hand: Joe Geller. Asst. Farmer: Srdjan Zelenovic. Girl combs: Daria Di Lazarro. Baron's assistant: Arno Juerging. Also: Leo Bonino, Carla Maccari, Marco Lottred.





Dominique Darrell falls prey to Count Dracula who is soon disappointed to learn that she is not a virgin.



Count Dracula (Udo Kier) comes to the grim realization that his latest victim, Stefano Casini, is also not a virgin. His desperation heightens: no one seems to be a virgin any more!

#### ANDY WARHOL'S DRACULA

Need we mention that Andy Warhol's *DRACULA* makes vampirism look even more erotic than is customary? In this Gothic farce, the bloodsucking Count (Udo Kier) dry-humps his victims even as he drains them. But only "virgins" can slake his thirst; so he packs up his coffin and heads for Italy, where the influence of "Holy Mother Church" will hopefully assure an abundance of unutilized maidens.

In deference to the film's X rating, however, Dracula finds himself in a madcap household whose manageable daughters are all either lesbians or nymphs. What follows is a bawdy and

rollicking horror movie satire, graced with lush photography and lavish production values.

Paul Morrissey's direction is schematically straightforward; he relies so heavily on close-ups that the flutter of an eyelash almost stirs the breeze in the theater. Music enhances characterization: a Slavonic rhapsody denoting the title protagonist; a risky-dink piano rag for lusty leading man Joe Dallesandro, and a saucy of Bartok for the final chase scene. The period is the Twenties: central Europe relaxing between world wars; tuxedo-clad men with their oily hair slicked right down to their skulls; girls in frilly white organdy dresses and

fuzzy coiffures hot of the curling iron.

Even better than the ambience, however, is the priceless hokey dialogue, delivered in fractured English by an international cast of incompetents. Udo Kier is the most stylistically consistent Dracula yet, a moonbagon soul so broadly romantic, he might have strayed in from a road company of "Werther." His valet is Arno Juerging, who addresses his lines to the camera as often as not, and gives a performance that looks like a warm-up act at the Continental Baths. Maxine McKendry, as the grande dame, comes on with a hair-brained hauteur which suggests Betty Ford doing a turn as Lady Murgatroyd.

And, as the "hired hand," there's Joe Dallesandro, whose superstar status is underlined by the cory positioning of a log in the scene where he splits kindling. Joe is asked to mouth all manner of trendy, cliché revolutionary slogans: in his terminology, vampires are just another breed of social parasite. And one must admit that the spectacle of a dyspeptic Dracula vomiting blood is certainly decadent, though hardly bourgeois.

—Paul Roen—

#### A 2nd VIEW

The squamish and fare-of-heart may find Andy Warhol's DRACULA a blood-letting cory that's hard to take. Loosely based on the DRACULA legend, the Warhol touch adds camp and sex, of course,

thus the old bloodsucker craves blood from virgins only, who seem to be in short supply even in an Italy of some 46 years ago. The havoc he causes in a household of young daughters is the basis for this plot, and there is quite a bit of it. About 45 minutes into the film, the gore begins, and it's served up in generous helpings—blood isn't in short supply. There's no 3-D here, but the look of the film is rich and beautiful. Director Mor mazy gets better with every effort and here he even coaxes a good performance out of Warhol regular Joe Dallesandro as the gardener who beds the daughters and finally does Dracula in.

There are cameo appearances from directors Roman Polanski and the late Vittorio De Sica. Claudia Giza has composed an effective moody score, and the production values are truly excellent.

—Sy Klopfer—

#### SYNOPSIS & CREDITS

Udo Kier is a youngish Dracula in the late 20's. He breeds his Transylvanian line to search for virgin blood in Italy and becomes a house guest of Vittorio De Sica, who happens to have four daughters. Dracula, who can only drink the blood of a virgin, has quite a time finding a real one even in a Catholic country, and the daughters are no exception since they are being tutored by De Sica's gardener Joe Dallesandro. Finally on to Dracula and his weirdo assistant, study, Udo Kier. Dallesandro takes after the vampire with an act and literally cuts him to pieces before drinking him through the heart in a horrific climax. The eldest daughter, who has also become a vampire, is killed in the same scene.

A. Hoffa/Warnerberg/Rosario Production. (Warner Bros. Pictures)—105 min.—Color. Written and directed by Paul Morrissey. Starring Udo Kier, Joe Dallesandro, Arno Juergens, Vittorio De Sica, Maurice McKendry, Stefane Cassini, Dominique Carron, Isabella Vokovic, Silvia Cristoso, Roman Polanski.





**SPOTLIGHTING ED PARKER  
AN UNKNOWN  
MONSTER  
STAR**



So you think you know your monster movies? You've seen hundreds of them and you know all your horror performers from A to Zucco, right? Well, if that's true, then this should be an easy Monster Trivia question for you:

Who played Dr. Frankenstein's creation in *SON OF FRANKENSTEIN* — *GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN* — and *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN*?

If you think the roles were portrayed by Boris Karloff, Lon Chaney Jr. and Bela Lugosi respectively, you're absolutely correct—except that when a scene called for strenuous and possibly dangerous action, the stars were replaced by a very special actor/stuntman in the films named above, plus many more in the years to follow.

The men being referred to—though remaining virtually unknown to this day—are Edwin Parker. Not only did he substitute in scenes for many great horror stars, but he also brought original monster characters to the screen. At the conclusion of *SON OF FRANKENSTEIN*, it was not Karloff who was pushed into the fiery sulphur pit by Dr. Frankenstein (Basil Rathbone), but Edwin Parker in *GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN*, when it came time to film the scene where the Monster is trapped in the exploding lab, it was



Parker who stepped in for Chaney Jr.

But Parker's most extensive portrayal of Mary Shelley's creature came with the production of *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN*. In the very first shot of the Monster, when Chaney Jr. discovers him encased in ice in a glacial cave, Parker's features are clearly visible through the makeup, not Lugosi's. In strenuous lifting scenes (when the Monster carries the heroine), Parker replaced Lugosi who was then in delicate health. Again, in the lab scene at the film's climax, it's Parker who gets strapped on the operating table, and who stepped in for Lugosi for most of the fight action between the Monster and the Wolf Man.

Parker even portrayed Frankenstein's creation in a bit for a comedy film with Olsen and Johnson, entitled *HELLZAPOPPIN*. So, in fact, Edwin Parker played the Frankenstein Monster four times in his career, which is more than either Boris Karloff or Glenn Strange did.

Parker matched his feet by appearing as the Mummy in four different films. When the script called for the Mummy to go up in flames or disappear beneath a swamp, Parker was enlisted in to do the honors for Lon Chaney Jr. in *THE MUMMY'S TOMB*, *THE*

Ed Park, unheralded Hero of the Horrors, seen in some of his famous doubling roles. Above: substiting for Lon Chaney Jr. in *THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN* (note also another pro stuntman's special body control while taking a tumble from the Monster). Parker also doubled (below) for Arthur Franz in *MONSTER ON THE CAMPUS*. Opposite page:

18 Parker, doubling for Karloff, is about to accost Bud Abbott in *A&C MEET DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE*.





**MUMMY'S GHOST** and in **THE MUMMY'S CURSE**. In the latter, Universal's last entry in the series, Parker actually had more screen time than Cheatey because of Lon's disreputable faction with the role. The last Mummy job essayed by Parker—though not actually part of the "true" series—was in **ABBOTT & COSTELLO MEET THE MUMMY** (1955). Weeder of wonders, Parker actually received screen credit for his work in this one.

Due to his capabilities as a stuntman, Parker was much sought after to perform in serials during the late Thirties and Forties. Among many others, he took the falls, did the tumbles and handled the rough work in **THE NEW ADVENTURES OF BATMAN AND ROBIN**—**KING OF THE ROCKY MEN**—and in serials he doubled for Buster Crabbe in **FLASH GORDON**—**FLASH GORDON'S TRIP TO MARS**—**FLASH GORDON CONQUERS THE UNIVERSE**, and **BUCK ROGERS**.

Another one of Parker's notable movie-star portrayals was in **ABBOTT & COSTELLO MEET DR. JEKYLL & MR. HYDE**. Since most of the time Mr. Hyde's scenes show him dashing madly from the scene of a crime or jumping from rooftop to rooftop, it was Parker who doubled for Karloff in most of the "active" Hyde sequences. Parker also doubled for Arthur Franz in **MONSTER ON THE CAMPUS**, a story about a professor who accidentally turns himself into a primitive cave man.

In the 1950's, Parker added to his screen repertory three unique and original monster characterizations. In **THIS ISLAND EARTH**, when the scientists were called upon to save the dying planet of Metakora, one of the terrors they encountered was the towering brain-heavy, insect-like Mutant, portrayed by the redoubtable Edwin Parker.

In **TARANTULA**, Parker's role was that of Leo G. Cerro's lab assistant who experi-

ments with a serum that turns him into a hideous creature afflicted by the symptoms of a disease called apoplexy.

Parker was also one of the giant mole-like slaves in a lost subterranean Sumerian city, ruled by aliens in **THE MOLE PEOPLE**.

Thirteen years after he doubled for Bela Lugosi in **FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN**, Parker performed similar chores in **BRIDE OF THE MONSTER**. In the course of the story, Lugosi is unwittingly transformed into a super-human creature by his monomaniacal servant, Lobo (Tor Johnson). The ensuing battle has Parker—in Lugosi's role—pitted against the gergantuan Lobo.

Over the years, Edwin Parker made many a horror film more exciting and interesting with daring stunts which the stars were unable to perform and by also creating original monster characterizations—with his untimely death in 1967 from a heart attack.

—FUTURE DOCTOR—



Opposite page: In perhaps the only major role that was solely his own, Ed Park is the Mummy in *A&C MEET THE MUMMY*. On both sides, Bud and Lou pause from Ed's claws and all have good gauze to worry. Above—seeming to have cornered the brain-trust market, Parker (as the Mutant) hassles Rex Reason and Faith Domergue in *THIS ISLAND EARTH*. Below—as a mole man, killing off poor Nestor Paiva in *THE MOLE MEN*.



# PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE





Opposite: Paul Williams as Swan, evil genius, owner-entrepreneur of The Paradise, the ultimate rock palace  
Above: The Phantom (William Finley)



Paul Williams contemplated his stretch and smile, squashed down in his chair and considered the question "Is pop music taking a romantic turn?"

Paul replied: "I can't relate to the rest of the music business, but I know what my audience is thinking. And they know what it is to be lonely or to love someone so much it hurts."

This goes a long way to explain the thrust of a long line of Paul Williams songs, ranging from "We're Only Just Begun" to "Nice To Be Armand," the love from the film *CINDERELLA LIBERTY* (nominated for an Academy Award), and now—his much-faceted acknowledgments for *PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE*. His music, for that matter, however, includes some items he probably wouldn't have written otherwise. Paul said:

"In our literature, there are a lot of stories about people who have sold their souls to the devil, such as 'Faust.' 'The Picture of Dorian Gray,' and 'The Devil and Daniel Webster,' and so on.

"In *PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE*, the hero is a rock concert promoter who has made a deal with the devil. In return for his soul, he won't ever age, his concerts will all be sell-outs. A lot of the action takes place around the concert hall."

To get the right locations, *PHANTOM'S* actors and crews have spanned the continent.

"There's an old secession theater in Dallas that was just right for the concert scenes," Paul noted. During the interview, his stay in New York was to do some interior shots in an old barn of a theater on 174th Street, plus some downtown exterior scenes.

*PHANTOM* is just the slightest pointing in Paul's new direction for his career. "I'm totally committed to film," he said, and, while it won't stop him from writing and performing, the medium will certainly take up more of his time. His songs for *PHANTOM* include four that aren't normally his bag. These are the ones written for the concert segments—Alice Cooper songs, as he calls them.

"Furry—Alice and I are very good friends. But musically we're way apart."

His comments about Nelson Riddle arrangements (he loves them) brought also at a couple of thoughts on the way Paul works as a writer. The question came up as to whether he could read music.

"Just barely," he replied. And the setup in his digs at the Plaza Suite (the very one that was used in Neil Simon play of the same name) tended to bear this out.

Paul had rented a Fender-Rhodes electric piano and had it set up in one of the bedrooms.

"I can play a tune on the piano and have a copyist write it down over the telephone. It's a very easy way to work."

Film work has brought him in contact with a lot of people he can respect. For example, Brian DePalma (Soder) who wrote and directed *PHANTOM*, has been tabbed as one of the best of the new breed, and he's pleased to have in his film George Memmola of *Mean Streets* fame.

The man behind the camera is Britisher Larry Pizer—"That's Pized-ee," Paul noted, pronouncing the 'z' the way the British do—"zed."

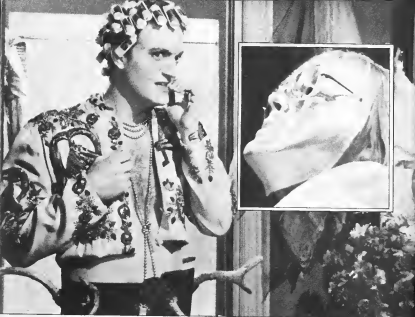
Acting is actually Paul's first love. Many may have forgotten, but Paul's first notable film stint was as *THE LOVED ONE*, in the role of a precocious 11-year-old who falls around with scientific research and model jet rockets. He was already 22 at the time, but his perennial baby-face and stature made him ideal for the part. His current involvement with films started when he was looking for a way to relax after a particularly grueling tour.

"I thought I'd do a little of what I like best—hang around a movie set for awhile. And then I found myself in the makeup chair three hours a day for the last 'Apes' movie, *THE BATTLE FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES*."





Opp. page: the Phantom at the console composing his original music for the Paradise's gala opening. Inserts—top: Beef (Gerri Graham) is the glitter-rock star who is troubled by the Paradise's eerie events; he's also troubled by being turned down in the Miss America Pageant. Bottom: Paul Williams, author reminding one a little of Winston Churchill or Dr. Jekyll. Above: the Phantom enjoying a new "high" at the rock saloon.



Beef (Graham) is worried, all dolled up in curries and thinks someone's out to spook him for a change. Uh, oh—the dear thing has just lost an eye-lash. Insert: Paul Williams in a diabolical situation about to do something evil—perhaps even nasty.

Paul's next film will be **ARTHUR, AMONG THE ANIMALS**, which deals with a feline in the life of a veterinarian. But there was yet other business to be gotten out of the way first—a swing around the college concert circuit, and appearances with Liza Minnelli, including three weeks in Las Vegas. He's shared the bill with Liza before, and he holds her in high esteem.

"She's a lady and loaded with talent. A really gifted lady. We worked together at the Greek Theater—that's the big gig in Los Angeles—and the audience couldn't get enough."

He had teamed up with NBC's **THE MAGICIAN** to do more films, which may not have been completely absorbed by the cancellation of this excellent show, since Paul claimed, "Bill Bixby and I have a production deal together to do one movie a year."

His personal life has taken a happy new turn. A year ago, there was a divorce in his past and, speaking about it, his voice took on the most serious sort of his conversation. But the present is different.

"Right now, I'm an unmarried man. But there is a lady; she's wonderful. She makes it very easy to stay home."

But staying home isn't all that easy, what with film work and touring. And besides, so-

ring cut down on his song writing. He has, however, come up with enough new material to fill a new album for A & M entitled, "Inspiration." He pulled out a little Crag cassette recorder and slipped in a cartridge. The strains of "You and Me Against the World" came out, and they suggested that Paul has lost neither his writing touch nor his romantic bent.

The music concluded. Paul went back to his armchair and scotch. He was in faded denim and spangled T-shirt, with "Aloha" glittering across his tummy which seemed more than

"Yep—42 pounds. How'd it happen?" Well, there was an awful lot of broiled chicken and fish. And I sat down on the drinking too. Now, if I take a bath in mashed potatoes, it's back to cottage cheese the next day. And if I have a few drinks one night, I'll go without for a couple of days."

It was now getting time to say goodbye, and Paul turned philosophical for a moment.

"You know—on the day my album will be released, I'll be 33 & 1/3 years old. If that isn't an oxymoron, I don't know what it."

—Allen Moeasley—

## PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE

—Synopsis and credits

Rose voiced moose Swain (Paul Williams) runs Dead River's (symbolized by a dead bull) and is about to open the ultimate rock and popster, the Paradise. He uses the music of rock's Winslow Leech (William Furley), where he himself is in prison. Escaping, Winslow winds Swain's warehouse, where part of his face is burned in a record press. In exchange for starring his beloved Phoebe (Jessica Harper), Winslow—now dressed as a ghost—agrees to complete his castle on the "Y-axis" legend for Swain. However, Swain uses Phoebe as a backup singer for gay beef (David Graham), whose guitar rock act drives the audience into a frenzy. When Winslow burns beef to death on stage, Phoebe goes on and is an immediate hit, she becomes Swain's mistress as Winslow learns he's sold his soul to Swain, who in turn had sold his to the devil. Saving Phoebe from being assassinated on live TV as she's sold to Swain, the Paradise causes both his and Swain's deaths.

### CREDITS

20th Century-Fox (91 minutes). Color. Written and dir. by Brian DePalma; produced by Edward R. Pressman. Story by Larry Pritz. Music: Paul Williams. Additional scoring: George Altschorn Tapson. Spcl fx: Greg Awe. Starring: Paul Williams, William Furley, Jessica Harper, George Memmoli, David Graham, Jeffery Combs, Aechia Hahn, Harry Collins, Gene Gross, Harry Calvert, Ken Carpenter, Sam Fennay, and others.





Although all of his films (starting off with his first one, a simple 5-minute cartoon titled *THE CRITIC*, which won a Special Award) have been critically acclaimed, have earned him huge cult followings and the reputation among many esteemed critics who think he is the greatest comedy genius around, Mel Brooks really didn't start to hit the jackpot until *BLAZING SADDLES* came out last year. Brooks' latest, *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN*, looks even bigger at the box office, and one estimate given is that it'll gross in 1975 as much as *LOVE STORY*.

When he was a kid, he says, he was too short, too slow and too weak to keep up with peer group of jocks and future leaders on their own terms. So he became their court jester and mascot, launching his career in comedy as an act of self-protection.

"And pretty soon," Mel added, "I came to hate them all. I really hated them for what they made me be. Inside every funny man there is a serious man wondering if it is safe to step outside. In fact, the frustration of being a funny man is that it is so difficult for that serious man to let himself be seen."

Brooks is a marvelous and unpredictable clown. On first meeting him a couple of years ago, he said apologetically, "I'm sorry if I seem a little depressed, but I'm just getting over what could have been a really magnificent cold."

Still, Brooks smashes in cooperation when strangers clap him on the back, tell him jokes he doesn't want to hear, and promise that he is wholly and solely the clown 24 hours a day.

The comedian runs the same kind of public peril as the screen tough guy, forever being challenged by snipers. The major annoyance are only minor, the major annoyance is to be taken less seriously than you should be.

"After all," Mel says, "I expect to have a senseless death. I would like to have had a senseless life."

He had moved from survival comedy to professional comedy inadvertently. Mel was working as a drummer in the house band at a Cabbie's resort when the "bar" came out sick. Brooks knew the dreadful realities by heart—"I just flew in from Chicago and, boy, are my arms tired"—and took over. But he learned a lesson when he brought the house down with a sly impersonation of the hotel manager, a hysterical legend in his own time.

The lesson was that the best humor comes truth with it, and it's something Mel has never forgotten, although he has also learned to keep it in perspective.

"I know comedy. It's my job and I'm a good confidante. I'm a laugh maker and there aren't many of us around. There certainly aren't many of us making movies any more. Woody Allen, Elaine May, me. Few, few, few. Too few."

"And the laughs have to be there. If they aren't, nothing else helps, and nothing else matters."

Mel Brooks spent several years as one of the writers on the variously titled Sid Caesar shows, weekly comedy (intensely, considering our plastic times, all of it was done live!) with brilliantly raised slapstick, nonsense, parody and close observations of our flaws and follies. Later Mel cohosted one of TV's greatest situation comedies, *GET SMART*, Mel admits. "It paid the rent for five years."

Brooks' feature film debut, *THE PRODUCERS*, won him an Oscar for best original script in 1968 and is now a cult classic. It cost only about \$380,000 but has not yet started turning a profit. Brooks states:

"Joe Levine keeps telling me it will be in the black any time now. Still and all, he let me do it and do it my way, and he let me have final cut. I can't complain."

His second film, *THE TWELVE CHAIRS*, was even less successful commercially, although Mel loves it and although it too now enjoys a cult following. But until *BLAZING SADDLES* came along earlier last year, Mel claims he was reduced to doing the Johnny Carson Show for the money rather than the exposure.

What made him eager to do *BLAZING SADDLES*, which had originated under other auspices as "Black Bart," was—Mel insists—the possibility of getting a movie in a time when Howard Johnson only had "one flavor."

He did not expect it to fail but he never expected the notoriety success of *BLAZING SADDLES*.

"But it came in the middle of a drought, with audiences screaming for escapist stuff, and there we were."

Mel feels that *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN* really is a homage to the movies, a homage rendered with impeccable fidelity by Brooks and his collaborator, Gene Wilder. The impeccable glimpse of the distant castle of Frankenstein sitting atop its very own pinnacle, the colorfully intricate, the music at once eerie and comical, the specific borrowings (such as the haunts from *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*) all bespeak a loving familiarity with the objects of their affection.

And although *BLAZING SADDLES* had a start-to-finish coherence, it is noted to play as a mosaic of moments which worked brilliantly or not at all. *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN* is similarly sewn with eight gaps (often involving Marty Feldman's divergent eyes), old jokes and slapstick—yet the flick plays much more as a warm and coherent piece, the whole greater than the sum of the parts. It gets ironic where *BLAZING SADDLES* got rows, and it has an unrelenting tone of sarcasm and angst more where *SADDLES* was obvious and aggressive.

Serious messages are not what *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN* is about, as Mel is quick to admit, yet he has no doubt that it is more than a series of panned jokes.

"The monster is what people who are afraid of intelligence think intelligence would look like if it were a person."



Blissful scene: the Monster (Peter Boyle) and the Bride (Madeline Kahn). Marty Feldman (below) as Igor, who knows how to back up his hunch.



Marty Feldman, as Igor the playful hunchback, meets Freddie Frankenstein (Gene Wilder).

Notwithstanding the fact that it is a no-holds-barred parody, **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN** continues to carry on the basic "message" that has been the embodiment of its predecessors: it reflects the old dream man has had of immortality, which itself reflects a wish for God-like powers. Not the least of all, the story is a commentary on intolerance and rebellion. The messages are not pressed, of course, but they are there.

—Dave Karger —

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#### A SECOND VIEW

The times are now so depressing that audiences will flock practically anywhere in search for laughs, or even in search of Buddy Murphy (remember?). Consequently, Mel Brooks' **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN** will rack up millions in profits, as many of the professional reviewers believe. And, why not? It has Brooks' signature "way on top," Gene Wilder's presence, and... a successful name that has been used more times than any in film history: **FRANKENSTEIN**! We must have with adroit to preface by feeling momentarily delighted that inside of only a year, the **FRANKENSTEIN** name has been used in three tremendous productions, each one a colossal hit: NBC's 6-hour **FRANKENSTEIN**,

**THE TRUE STORY**—Andy Warhol's **FRANKENSTEIN**—and, now, the Mel Brooks version. (At last, we are avenged!)

Much better than **BLAZING SADDLES**—although still overshadowed by Brooks' best film, **THE PRODUCERS**—**YOUNG FRANK**'s disconcerts on various levels. It's aim is satire via sight gags, one-liners and a load of sitcom-like episodes. The trouble is that most of such humorist moments lack development and seem ill-thought out or virtually contemporaneous—as if devised between takes. From all this, there are about six or seven rather good sequences at best, and several of the finest get quickly used up around 12 minutes into the film.

Dr. Frankenstein (Gene Wilder)—an American descendant of the famed family, teaching in a Baltimore "med" college—is quick to establish his embarrassment over his ancestral name by correcting his class over the pronunciation; it's not "Frank-en-stein," he points out, "it's Frunkhen-shteyn!"

An old family retainer comes all the way from Europe to inform Wilder that he's now the heir to the old Castle of Frankenstein's fortune and estate in Transylvania. Upon Wilder's arrival, the train pulls up to his stop and Wilder asks a shoeshine boy:

"Pardon me, boy—is this the Transylvania Station?" The kid says, "Yes, track

49." Wilder: "Well, then, you can give me a shine?"

No, that's not one of the better bits, though typical of most. As Wilder gets off the train, the station seems strangely desolate... except for a weirdly perked kooky hunchback (excellently played by Marty Feldman), who greets Wilder.

"Dr. Frankenstein?"

"Franken-shteyn," Wilder corrects.

"Ye Eye-gore," Feldman replies.

"You mean Igor?"

"No, Eye-gore," Marty answers.

Noting Marty's humped disfigurement with compassion, Wilder taps the bump for gress off a seat sharp on each hip, and clinically informs him, "You know, I happen to be a brilliant doctor and can correct your hump!"

There's a beautifully timed pregnant pause; Feldman grins broadly, rotating his huge protruding eyeballs, and says, "What? hump?" Another pregnant pause and subtle double-take.

Next, Marty motions to Wilder to follow him from the station. Holding on to a bony, crooked walking stick, Marty walks down several steps and says, "Walk this way," then hands the little cane to Wilder, who also leans on it, emulating Marty's hobble-walk. Marty beams approvingly, "That's right—walk this



way?" Wilder hobbles on with the little cane, doing another double-take. Since this sequence is mostly visual, it has to be seen to be believed. It's well done, and so are a few others, unfortunately, they're not that many. And, in fact, the above may be the film's best gag.

The overall mood, whether humorous or straight, is of course surreal, therein rests the film's strength, . . . despite the fact that I think a better comedy could have been created by, say, intelligently editing a number of old *MUNSTER* or *ADDAMS FAMILY* shows into one feature film.

The visuals though are good, often great. Boeske definitely adheres to the fine traditional style of the old Universals, the treatment is reverential and sentimental and, thankfully, nearly totally devoid of some of *BLAZING SADDLES*'s tastelessness. Lighting, camerawork and general production values are excellent. Boeske wanted so much to maintain high standards that he even enlisted 77 year-old Kenneth Sackheim (who did all the effects and lab sets for the 1931 *FRANKENSTEIN*) to recreate the original Universal mad-lab mystique. Combined with

nostalgic black-and-white photography, the sets and overall effect is quite stunning.

None of the players are open to criticism, except for sly and rather plain-looking Ten Gars (allegedly the film's cute chick), and Kenneth Mars, whose Laurel Aitken contorted inspector takeoff (from *SON OF FRANKENSTEIN*) is almost ruined by a bad dialect impression that's poorly written and overlong. But there is the welcome presence of Peter Boyle, in the best Monster satire-situation since *AAC MEET FRANK*. . . and Melodie Kohn (as Dr. F's fiancée) who's abducted by the Boyle Monster—she undergoes a minor trauma and develops an Elsa Lanchester *BRIDE* hairdo complete with white streaks. Clois Leachman (in an evil Judith Anderson makeup good enough to make her double for Judith) takes off on Maria Gasparkova, playing a violin to calm down the Monster. Gene Hackman does an astounding guest-shot in a takeoff on the blind hermit in *BRIDE*—his makeup and the set is faithful to the original, but that's where the similarity ends (the Monster's thumb is burnt and swelling soap is spilled on him by blind hermit Hackman).



Opposite page: Igor (Marty Feldman) makes a perfect choice at the local brain bank. Later, Dr. Frankenstein (Wilder) asks him, "What kind of brain?" Igor answers that it was "Abie Normal's!" Insert: Teri Carr as Inga, Kenneth Strickfadden (who devised the original mad lab set-up for the 1931 **FRANKENSTEIN**) recaptures a proper setting for Dr. Frankenstein (Wilder) who's about to give life to his creation (Peter Boyle), in the above scene. Insert: Clois Leachman, in a grand Judith Anderson takeoff, plays the sinister Frau Blucher. Below: Blind Hermit Gene Hackman pours scalding soup on Monster Boyle's lap.



The peculiar thing about Brooks' **FRANKENSTEIN** is that there's a big tendency to begin suspending criticism as you re-examine it as an introduction—not to fault it for its failings (which seem to shrink in the distance) but to admire the whole thing because of what Mel Brooks and his crew have accomplished. Such ambivalence is hardly unusual in the light of current, average film fare. Today, filmmaking may verge from a few productions of bar to top excellence to a mind-boggling quantity of carbon-copy, brain-rotting horrors—when they're good, they're very, very good, and when bad, simply horrid. In other words, there's an awesome gap between

garbage and quality—whether conditions of the times are at fault (which they are), or it's because of pressures brought about by high-concept-theater binds, fact is that satisfying films have been fewer the last few years.

Brooks' **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN** is very satisfying. Enough said.

—Cal Beck—

**YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN**—cast & credits  
Director, Mel Brooks; prod., Michael Grusnick; screenplay, Mel Brooks; Gene Wilder, score; John Morris, makeup; William Tuttle, cost. Ed. Henry Miller, Hal Miller.  
Dr. Frankenstein, Gene Wilder; Monster, Peter

Boyle; Igor, Marty Feldman; Elizabeth, Madeline Kahn; Frau Blücher, Cloris Leachman; Inga, Totti Garti; Inspector Kemp, Alan Rickman; Mrs. Van Helsing, Richard Haydn; Blind Storm, Gene Hackman; Othello, Liam Cullen; Oscar Beatty, Danny Goldstein; Lou Cutler, Anne Beatty; Author Melzer.

#### PLAY-IN-AMUSEP

On being introduced to his heir to the Frankenstein estate in Transylvania, Freddie Frankenstein (Wilder) goes to take possession hoping to regain dignity to the disreputable family name. After getting by Fräulein Blücher (Leachman) or "Gee-gee" (Feldman), he arrives at Castle Frank and meets torpid doctor Frau Blücher (Leachman), the housekeeper. Nightmares plague Freddie, telling him he cannot escape his ancestor's "doctors." Inga (Garti) awakens him; they hear a word Transylvanian lullaby played on a violin, and track it down to a strange hidden study where they find a violin and a burning cigar but no occupant, but Freddie does discover his grandfather's secret notes detailing the "mythologies of life and death." This triggers off a reaction in him, and now Freddie desires to do what the original Dr. Frankenstein did.  
Once he gets all the vital body parts together, only a brain is now needed. Igor is sent by Freddie to find one in a nearby medical center, but the little hunchback panics, dropping the jar with the "good" brain, substituting it with one labeled, "Abnormal—Do Not Use It!" The Monster (Boyle) is finally created completely with scars and... zippers!  
After some trouble with the Monster, he is subdued, meanwhile Blücher (Leachman) reveals to Freddie that she and his grandfather, Victor Frankenstein, had been lovers and that the first Monster was really their joint creation. He also confesses she considers zippers. Freddie decides not to destroy the Monster upon reading reports of the man whose brain was used and that he was capable of affection and turned violent only when humiliated. Freddie succeeds in winning over the Monster thru affection, and they establish a friendship. After a little mishap, Freddie believes he's now ready to show the world his successful creation. He and the Monster make a public appearance on stage dressed in top hat and tails, performing "Putting On the Ritz"—all singing, all dancing. The Monster's composure gets disrupted by an exploding stage light, and the audience laughs, leaving vegetables at him humiliated, he's back on the rampage. Inspector Kemp (Rickman) and the villagers are after him. Elizabeth has been carried off by the Monster who "kiss" her—seven times—and Elizabeth's terror changes to sympathy. Though both are locked together in romance, the Monster gets up and leaves abruptly on hearing the Transylvanian Lullaby—to Elizabeth's dismay.  
Lured by the Lullaby back to the castle, the Monster is also back on the operating table. Freddie has a brainstorm: the only way to save the situation (and themselves) is by changing the Monster's character by transplanting part of Freddie's brain into him.  
Just as the Inspector and mad villagers break in on the scene, and ready to tear everything apart, the Monster arises and oratorically spells them into awe. Impressed that things have turned out all right, the villagers leave, convinced that Freddie is a "good guy" and that the Monster means it when he says that all he wants to do in life from hereon in is to be a well-fellow and inspire affection.  
Which he does, since not only has the Monster changed during the transplant-of-brain-but, he's also passed on his own love-making strength to Freddie!







Opp. page: warm, froil and obvious homage paid to a key scene from the original 1921 FRANKENSTEIN. Above: the unhappily villagers about to tear the joint apart in the big climactic "about to tear the joint apart" sequence. Below is a scene of special historical and even historical significance: it's the scene when Victor and the Rylee Monster do their thing, dancing, losing in "Fading on the Side"—this shot also shows Marty Feldman who never appeared in the first screen scene. Come to think of it, neither did any of the CoF staff. . . but, wait until you see MIDDLEAGED FRANKENSTEIN II!

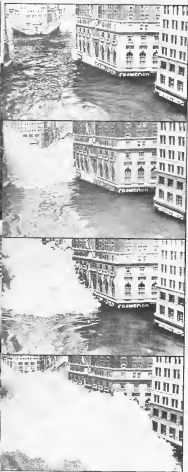


# the genius of



# george pal





At 69 years of age, George Pal has been a solid SF fantasist for most of his colorfully active and productive life. Some of today's greatest animators and names in the film industry, such as Ray Harryhausen, have been associated with him. Pal's SF/fantasy film reputation is now legendary, backed by over 38 years of puppeteering and animation experience that started in his native Hungary. In 1940 he went to Hollywood and started producing the now classical "Puppetoons" which won him in 1943 a Special Academy Award for "the development of novel methods and techniques." Later he produced many outstanding feature films, among them such classics as *THE WAR OF THE WORLDS* and *THE TIME MACHINE*.

This exclusive interview with George Pal was created especially for CoF by Fred von Bennewitz whose own credentials encompass the authorship and editing of "The Mad Magazine Checklist," and as film editor of several Robert Gouney features (*CHAFED ELBOWS*, *BABO 73*, etc.) plus many other theatrical, industrial and TV films.

\* \* \* \* \*

*This interview took place during Imaginations, Rochester's Festival of World Films, which bestowed a special tribute to George Pal. The Festival showed several of Pal's films, including THE WAR OF THE WORLDS, WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE, THE TIME MACHINE and 7 FACES OF DR. LEO. Pal also showed several original 16mm Technicolor print Puppetoons from his personal collection. Prior to screening a 35mm Technicolor print of WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE (with the spectacular Flooding of Herald Square sequence curiously missing), George Pal was given a plaque honoring his contributions to the film arts by Imaginations' Gene DePrez (chairman and Festival Director), Richard Goffin (program chairman) and Peter Cowie (international program consultant). The plaque reads:*

*"In grateful tribute to GEORGE PAL, film-maker, animator, architect of imagination, who has shown the world to be more terrifying than we imagine and more delightful than we dream, who has given us splendid images of man at the edge of technology, art and ingenuity, reaching to extend his mastery over the universe and surviving in triumph—who in his own way has been that man."*

*Following some fifteen minutes of introductions by Messrs DePrez, Goffin and Cowie, George Pal thanked his hosts and paid a tribute to the film industry and his millions of fans, concluding with:*

*"I just arrived here an hour ago and I'm full of presents... thank you very much. May I add just one thing: being a born Hungarian—of course, I am an American and very proud of it—there are two Hungarians who are on the Film Festival that I would like to plug. First there is Miklos Jancso, who has made a Hungarian picture which is compared with WAR AND PEACE, and the other one is Emile Kowacs, and he was a good friend—I knew him. Thank you very much."*

*Following the screenings, George Pal talked with CoF on a variety of subjects...*

#### WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE:

New York gradually disappears under a deluge. The world is about to end. Depicted below is Gothen's Herald Square area. Building at left is now Korvette's dept. store; to the right, atop Crownford's, is the McAlpin Hotel, scene of many SF/fantasy conventions.



A scene from one of George Pal's PUPPETOONS.

**CoF:** When you began your career in films, how did you happen to choose the "special effects" field?

**PAL:** Well, I have to go really "way back," where it started, because my whole family—my father, mother, grandfather, grandmother and uncles and aunts—they were all on the stage in one form or another in Budapest. And of course I was rebelling. I didn't want to be an actor or a singer or a piano-player, so I decided to become an architect. I did graduate as an architect but when I got my diploma there was no work in Hungary for an architect. Consequently, I started to do something else. I drew pretty good and started to make animated cartoons, but pretty soon these cartoons weren't enough—it was too flat for me, so I devised a technique which I called "Puppetoons," which basically has the same principle as a cartoon except that instead of making a drawing I made a puppet and shot one frame and changed the puppet's head and shot another frame.

You see, the Puppetoon technique is basically this: for instance, if you say "Yes," that takes probably nine differ-

ent heads—one, the mouth is closed, the next one, it's a little bit more open, the next more and more and more, and so on. But it's very time-consuming, you take this head and put it on the puppet and shoot one frame, then you take that head off and you put another head on and shoot another frame and once you repeat this procedure 24 times you have exactly one second of film.

**CoF:** How did you get the technique so that it was usable at all? The patience and the time consumed must have been exhausting!

**PAL:** Well, I had very patient people who worked with me.

**CoF:** Have you been able to speed this process up in any way?

**PAL:** No, it's really hand-made film, just like cartoons are hand-made. Paramount had brought me out to this country, thank God, and I made lots of Puppetoon for them, but after a while it wasn't enough to make these shorts. I wanted to do live-action pictures and wanted to use my experience in special-effects and stop-motion and things like that. My first live-action picture was... actually

I made two films together—**THE GREAT RUPERT** with Jimmy Durante, who still thinks that's his best picture, but unfortunately it wasn't quite as successful as others—and **DESTINATION MOON**.

**CoF:** Back on the Puppetoons, when you were changing the heads, for instance, how did you make sure that they were each signed properly?

**PAL:** We had all kinds of registration pins which were the stabilizing factors.

**CoF:** How about the one with the truck that flew through the air—how did you keep it from swinging?

**PAL:** Well, there are wires, but the wires are registered, so it's very much controlled. The wire, naturally, you don't see.

**CoF:** How about in **THE WAR OF THE WORLDS**, where you can't see the wires at all, like in the scenes where the machines are moving out of the pits?

**PAL:** Well, there is so much smoke and other things going on in a scene like that. There is something interesting there, that is **DESTINATION MOON** we had a globe—the lights and the inside of the



A rare shot — on the set of *DESTINATION MOON* with George Pal.

spaceship all turned together with the camera, the whole set and the camera turned together. The actors did sometimes wear wires, but everybody's looking for vertical wires, you don't realize that the camera was sideways and the wires are horizontal. So no one looks for horizontal wires!

**CoF:** Have the techniques involving wires like that changed much over the years?

**PAL:** Yes, the wires are much better than they used to be, we used to have to use piano wire. The materials have changed for the better but the techniques are the same. Of course, there have been many improvements in back-projection and front-projection, too, and many things that make it much easier today than even twenty years ago. The new "fat" film is wonderful, too—we can shoot practically in normal room light.

**CoF:** How many Puppets were you able to make each year?

**PAL:** We had a kind of schedule: six weeks of preparation, six weeks of shooting, six weeks of post-production... something like that, but it was staggered. We made about six or seven a year. Six, I think, was the most. Usually we made only three or four. Altogether, counting the ones I made in Europe, I've made about 200 Puppets. We made something like 40 for Paramount.

**CoF:** Was there any studio control over them?

**PAL:** No, it was just economics—it cost between \$15,000 to \$30,000 to make each one. And later they became more

expensive, the costs kept going higher and higher, and the income was the same, I don't think theatres pay any more even today than they did 35/40 years ago for a short. They just drove us out of business, the attitude of the theatres and the attitude of the unions who meantime wanted higher and higher prices and we just couldn't cope with it. So we made the last one in 1947.

**CoF:** Does Paramount still own the Puppets?

**PAL:** No, an outfit in Los Angeles, they bought them from Paramount some years ago—National Telefilm Associates.

**CoF:** It was so good to see the audiences reacting to the Puppets that were shown here at *Imaginations*. The kids were laughing, the audience response was so real, so spontaneous and so nice to see after all these years.

**PAL:** Yes, and they seemed to respond to the same spots that they responded to 30 years ago. Except a few spots they responded more than they used to.

**CoF:** How did you come to do the *TOOL BOX* Puppets in 1971?

**PAL:** Chuck Jones asked me if I would do something for his TV show "The Curiosity Shop." I decided to do *TOOL BOX* as a ballet without any faces. We had lots of discussions as to whether we should put faces on the tools and give expressions, and I thought, well, let's let the "behavior" of the tools determine which one is the boy-tool and which one the girl-tool, and what they do, what their characteristics are, and etc., and you can do it. I think we proved it, didn't

we? Those were real tools, not puppets!

**CoF:** Yes, we think it was a really beautiful film. Were you ever interested in working with Walt Disney?

**PAL:** We were very good friends, and he asked me many times to come over and I just didn't feel like it at the time—probably I should have.

**CoF:** What did he want you to work on?

**PAL:** There was nothing in particular—his was like any major studio, he said work on anything you want, science-fiction, whatever. I had 20,000 *LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA*, but Paramount wouldn't make it, they would say, who the hell is interested in an old submarine, you know? You see, after *DESTINATION MOON*, I wanted to go back that way instead of the future, and I had it and Paramount said "No!" They said, make an "atomic submarine" film. I said no, I'm interested in 20,000 *LEAGUES*. I worked about two weeks with a writer trying to make an atomic submarine story and I gave up. And then Disney called me, Walt Disney himself, and just to tell you how nice a person he was, he said: "George, there's somebody here with the rights to 20,000 *LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA* and I recall that you were interested in it—I won't buy it unless you tell me that you are not going to do it," I told him, "God bless you, Walt, go ahead and do it because Paramount won't make it." And he did the same film that we had. The only difference was that he spent about \$4-million on it and my budget was \$1.1-million—and still Paramount

moment wouldn't make it! Isn't that idiotic, though? And Disney's film was very good. He told me that he had a sequence with the octopus that he didn't like, the way it turned out, and he redid it at a cost of \$400,000 extra! That's the kind of person he was. He didn't mind spending the extra money to do it right. Of course he had the money to do it, but he felt it should be done right.

**CoF:** Some people have been spreading stories that Disney was a money-grubber.

**PAL:** Not at all, just the opposite, in my experience anyway. He was always trying to do what he thought was the best. When I came over just with a bag of puppets from Europe, I got acquainted with him and he helped me all the time. I didn't know very much then and needed all the help I could get. He was very unselfish. Many people today are telling some bad stories about Walt, but I cannot tell a bad story about him. . . I'm sorry, but he was really very nice, a wonderful person.

**CoF:** It's not possible that Walt Disney's experience back in the 1920's, where Walter Lantz had grabbed the Oswald Rabbit character away from him, had so hardened Disney to being sure that he owned all the rights to anything he produced that he gave off an acquisitive impression, this may have later prompted stories of his fanatical protectiveness.

**PAL:** Well, I was really nobody at that time; I just had these Puppetoons that I had started to make and he was interested all the time. Either I called him or he called me to say, "Let's have lunch."

And we would have lunch. He was smoking like a chimney and I would say, "Why do you smoke so much, Walt?" But he kept on smoking, and that was unfortunately his downfall. He was practically a chain-smoker.

**CoF:** We know that you worked with Rev. Harryhausen at the early days of the Puppetoons. Were you very close with him?

**PAL:** Oh, yes, we worked together for many years on the Puppetoons, and we're still close friends. We've always wanted to work again, but somehow never make it. I have something that we should do together, then I find out he is busy, and if he has something, I am busy, so . . .

**CoF:** Did you ever work with Lester Bryant?

**PAL:** Just a very short time, just before he passed away, on a couple of Puppetoons in the 1940's.

**CoF:** And Wah Chang and Gene Warren? You worked with them on several features.

**PAL:** Oh yes, THE TIME MACHINE and several others. Gene Warren has a little studio and I think he merged with Cascade now. And Wah Chang. . . I think he's making educational films now.

**CoF:** Sure you've spent so much of your career in special effects, spectacular visuals and science-fiction, how do you feel about people like Stanley Kubrick and Douglas Trumbull who just dive in, never having made a film like that before, and become super-successful with a futuristic film?

**PAL:** I feel the more the merrier! I think it's wonderful, especially Kubrick who is one of the very greatest talents

of the motion picture business. . . I feel very good about it.

**CoF:** Of course, Kubrick obviously has a boundless imagination, but does it hold down simply to the money angle—that if you have enough money, the producer or director can just have all the people he needs to do whatever he is not experienced in?

**PAL:** Yes, an actually 2001 A SPACE ODYSSEY was a very expensive film. I think he really got acquainted with special effects through that picture, and he learned a great deal.

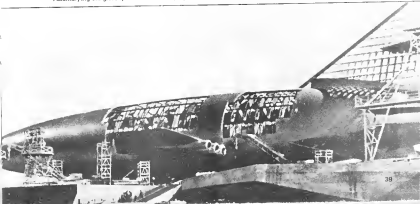
**CoF:** Seeing it 20 years later, WHEN WORDS COLLIDE seems very stiff and motionless, there's very little camera movement. Even given the ailing I guess we're used to more "yaks" now. The steady shot, held, gradually began to amuse the audience at Image/Nations.

**PAL:** Actually, you could take this picture and improve it tremendously just by re-cutting the timing of it. It's just that taste changes so much, now somebody says something and the music goes "Vroommm" . . .

**CoF:** In the last shot of WHEN WORDS COLLIDE, the pen aways from the spaceship to the landscape. I thought I saw things that looked like artificial construction, remnants of another civilization. Was this intended?

**PAL:** Well, not really. We wanted to do a sequel, there is a sequel AFTER WORLDS COLLIDE. I convinced Paramount that we should make it, but it just never materialized. Actually, the sequel is almost as good as the original. But that last shot was just for size, a "dummy" shot, it's not supposed to

Assembling the great space ark and readying to depart from a doomed Earth in WHEN WORDS COLLIDE.





#### WAR OF THE WORLDS.

**PAL:** Yes, he had a contract with them; it was either *Mate* or *John Farrow*.

**CoF:** How about *Chesley Bonestell*, do you ever see him?

**PAL:** Oh, he's still working; he must be in his 50s. He's still very active.

**CoF:** Can you tell us anything about *THE CONQUEST OF SPACE*? We all know it turned out badly. Were you forced to add a love interest to it, or what?

**PAL:** Well, it's just—how can I put it—one of those things... once in a while you get cornered and nothing works out at all.

**CoF:** That was your last film at Paramount?

**PAL:** Yes, and that was one of the reasons, among others.

**CoF:** In *THE TIME MACHINE*, you changed the character of *Weena* from what she was in the book—she became a very voluptuous girl...

**PAL:** Ha, ha—that wasn't bad, was it? I'll tell you what happened there. We shot certain things with *Yvette Mimieux* which were rather candid, and that was her first film, you know, and the scenes that we shot at the beginning which were supposed to be at the end of the story we had to re-shoot when the film was over because she had

been in the film because we had a better sequence for the end. Somebody was supposed to go out and test the atmosphere: will it work or will it not, like in the book. But we put in this shot to show what the landscape is going to look like, just made a quick sketch and photographed it. And the studio was so anxious to preview the picture that they showed it with that dummy shot. Well, the preview was very successful, unfortunately, and they said, "No, forget it, ship it—it's good enough!"—and we were heartbroken because we wanted to make a very suspenseful ending to it and have the cast walk out into a very beautiful miniature of that painting, but what were we going to do? It was a very good preview. Of course, this was 22 years ago and it didn't look as bad then as it looks today.

**CoF:** Were there any sequences shot for the film that were left out?

**PAL:** No, this is the way it was originally.

**CoF:** And it was a project that *Cecil B. DeMille* had considered?

**PAL:** Yes, in 1934 he had Paramount buy the property, but he never got into it any further. In fact, I made two of

his pictures. DeMille had actually bought *THE WAR OF THE WORLDS* originally. And this is funny—I remember it was the third day of shooting, when suddenly the head of the legal department comes in and says, "George, we have to stop production—we don't own the copyrights to the book!" But, fortunately, the H.G. Wells Estate was very kind and said they would give us the permission.

**CoF:** *WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE* has such clean surfaces, so much polish in the visuals. Is that a studio style or was it *Mate's* choice or *Bonestell's*?

**PAL:** Partly, yes. That was actually my first "studio" film. I had made *THE GREAT RUPERT* and *DESTINATION MOON* independently, back-to-back, while *WORLDS COLLIDE* was done for Paramount and certain studio polishes do show up, I think, since some of their own people worked with me on the film. I wasn't really sure how studios worked; I was a kind of babe-in-the-woods, and so I went along with them on which way this or that should be done.

**CoF:** Did they assign *Rudolph Mate* to you, then?

learned so much during the shooting that her performance was totally different. She's a very ambitious girl and very nice to work with.

**CoF:** Did you have any "books" in mind when, at the end of *TIME MACHINE*, *Rod Taylor* takes three books off the shelf to take back in the future? Or was it, as *Alan Young* said, "What would you take?"

**PAL:** Really, that is the way I feel and I change it all the time. I leave the challenge to the individual. It's a hard decision to make if you would be in that predicament. And the books which I had in mind at that time when I posed the question to myself are not the same books I would take today. And tomorrow I might take another three books. It was purposely designed that way, and I would like to keep it that way.

**CoF:** Have you ever thought of a sequel to *THE TIME MACHINE* or *DR. LAO*?

**PAL:** Yes, yes—I would have, but we just never got to it at MGM. We had very difficult times with just the changing of management. I would have loved to make a sequel having the *Time Traveler* go back in time, or—there was a great sequence which you missed, it just didn't fit in our plot—to go back to the same place and then go further into the future when the crabs took over.



Yvette Mimieux and Rod Taylor in *THE TIME MACHINE*.





Right: Dr. Lao (Tony Randall) confers with George Pal on the set of 7 FACES OF OR, L.A.O. Bottom: Spaceman in DESTINATION MOON. Below: Womani (Yvette Mimieux) swept away by a doting Morlock. Providing more fun and westerns go great together.





Rod Taylor overcomes fuel, traffic and towaway problems by scoring off in his super subplot in **THE TIME MACHINE**.

It was very beautiful. . . I can just see Rod Taylor and Yvette Mimieux, just the two of them there, go in there where the crabs are and the ocean is flat and doesn't move any more and the sun is hot all the time. I think we could have developed a very interesting story of the loneliness of these two people.

**CoF:** *Is there any possibility that this could still happen?*

**PAL:** The trouble is just like with **AFTER WORLDS COLLIDE**, which a very, very good book, where somehow or other we just never made it. We also entertained the idea to make a sequel to **DR. LAO**. We had one good core of a story that has Dr. Lao going behind the Iron Curtain. A good story there, but just blocked out. And it was good since it had political significance at the same time, and social significance.

**CoF:** *How do you feel about making films with social or political statements?*

**PAL:** Well, practically any film has something to say, every good film at least. I'm sure that **THE TIME MACHINE** had a lot to say, but I don't think people realize it; you don't hit them with a club.

It had a lot to say about a man who was born into the wrong century and he wasn't happy about it; he was a man who hated war and wanted to know if we would discontinue it. And **DR. LAO** had something to say: Dr. Lao came to town and he changed every person in town. Good films have something to say. I don't know yet how audiences will react to **DOC SAVAGE**, but I'm quite certain it will have something to say. And actually science-fiction films probably have, on an average, more to say than any other type of fiction.

**CoF:** *Was Tony Randall your choice for **DR. LAO**?*

**PAL:** No, I wanted Peter Sellers but MGM had Randall under contract which made Sellers' price \$50,000 more than for Randall. The studio was adamant and I lost.

**CoF:** *Perhaps we all did. Actually, I thought that Randall was superb in the seven roles, but considering the fact that, in New York City at least, **DR. LAO** had minimal distribution—I saw it for the first time here at *Imaginations*—I would think that Sellers' name would have*

*allowed the picture more play and it could have made much more money, more than compensating for the extra \$50,000.*

**PAL:** Yes, and all of my pictures have made a profit at the boxoffice—some more than others—except for **DR. LAO**. But even that came so close that the sale to TV put it into the "profit" column.

**CoF:** *That is really incredible! With your track record, the studios still give you a hard time on financing? Something is really wrong with the present system if losers can keep turning out films and people like you can't.*

**PAL:** It is sad, but we can only keep trying.

\* \* \*

(To be concluded in the next issue. In Part Two, George Pal bores back with **DOC SAVAGE**.)

# KOLCHAK: The Night Stalker

How the TV show is surviving; and  
a chat with Darren McGavin.

Plus: second big feature. An interview  
with the original Night Stalker  
Barry (VAMPIRE) Atwater.





Above: Simon Dekland as Vincenzo, editor-in-chief of a major Chicago daily, lecturing Carl Kolchak (Darren McGavin)

## KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER

How It's Surviving, plus a Chat with DARREN MCGAVIN

**KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER** may very well have survived last season's upheaval because it is a horror series that tries to be a little humorous. And don't confuse its attempts at comedy with "camp."

"Camp" has become a popular pursuit in recent years, spoofing nostalgia with a straight and innocent face. But in **KOLCHAK**, there is a deliberate effort not to take the chills too seriously, perhaps a safeguard against anti-violence reactionaries.

Whatever the reasoning, horror stories have a vast audience, particularly on college campuses. SF fantasy flicks on late-night TV draw good ratings. It therefore seemed logical to ABC-TV programmers last summer to offer a series featuring a monster-of-the-week on Friday night in the final hour of prime-time—from 10 to 11 p.m.

When the original **NIGHT STALKER** was shown several seasons ago, it drew one of the highest ratings of any movie ever made for TV. The show seemed to have a built-in following going into the new season. But the early returns in September indicated the following was small. In its first weeks, **KOLCHAK** was doing poorly in the ratings; it was a combination of various factors which were at fault.

Darren McGavin (who also owns a chunk of the action) said the network

was partially to blame because it didn't want to give up air time to promote the show. Darren said:

"They didn't want to give up valuable prime-time minutes to promote the show. They were more interested in selling commercial air time."

But there were other problems. The 10-11 spot on Friday night has never been the most popular time slot in prime-time. In fact, it has been more of a death row, or, as Darren preferred to call it, "It's the worst of the world. Everybody dies in that hour, on all networks."

Darren's point is quite valid. Rarely has a show been successful in that period, although "Police Woman" has been holding on with acceptable ratings on NBC. CBS long ago gave up and in recent years has delegated 9-11 on Fridays to feature films, usually in butchered-up shape.

To compound **KOLCHAK**'s problem at the start of the season, ABC came up with an ineffective schedule for Fridays. "Kolchak," starting off the night, proved to be a contagious disaster. Its poor ratings early in the evenings affected later shows. "Texas Wheelers" lasted only four weeks; "The Six Million Dollar Man," a hit the previous season, was suffering from poor ratings, and **KOLCHAK**—at the tail end of the night—took the worst licking of all. Something started happening though, and **KOLCHAK**'s ratings have been going steadily upward.

This increase in audience interest saved the series from mid-season cancel-

lation. Now, the network feels it will do even better leading off Friday nights at 8, although the competition gets rougher. NBC's "Sanford and Son" and "Chico" combine for the highest rated hour on TV during the week. CBS is now coming in with a new series Fridays at 8, an Oriental detective show titled **KHAN**, replacing **PLANET OF THE APES**.

"We're not going to make any major changes for the new time period," Darren revealed. "We talked about it, but feel we're doing well with our audiences now. Young people enjoy the fun and games."

Darren continued: "KOLCHAK isn't really a pure horror show, although it deals with man-killing monsters and creatures every week. You can't do a 'horror show' on network time. They [the networks] don't want to scare people out of their pants. The networks' attitude is a sort of concession to pressure groups."

"It's interesting what's happening between networks, pressure groups and the FCC. The networks are always concerned about being accused of excessive violence and influencing viewers. So what we try to do is keep the suspense, and at the same time I try to stay funny. Hopefully, we will have more humor now because we'll be on at an earlier time. But, of course, that depends on the writing."

Scripts, according to McGavin, are a major problem. There are times, he disclosed, when production on some episodes is done from scripts as soon as they



come off the mimeograph machines—while the ink is still wet.

"We're not like other action-dramas. You can dust off old scripts and feed them to other shows, but you can't re-write an old 'Cannon' for us as you can for 'Mannix,' 'Barnaby Jones' or 'Hairy O.'"

\* \* \* \* \*

# THE NIGHT STALKER IS ALIVE AND LIVING IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

An interview with the star of the  
Original NIGHT STALKER,  
Barry Atwater

As a veteran actor who had already racked up a considerable record in mainstream films and TV dramas, Barry Atwater suddenly achieved overnight fame as The Vampire Who Threatened to Destroy Las Vegas: the first and original THE NIGHT STALKER. In this special CoF interview, created by Richard E. Wells, Jr., Barry Atwater ventilates long behind-the-scenes concerns concerning the creation of STALKER—but, more importantly, he also reveals himself as a very articulate and highly aware individual with a very sensitive and sensible insight about filmmaking, acting as a career and about the world around him.

**CoF:** Do you remember the first big break that brought you into films?

**BA:** Yes—I worked as a student film at UCLA. The film got an Academy Award and the right notoriety; the aura around the Award was enough to get me an agent and some parts. I couldn't act my way out of a paper bag at the time, but it didn't matter.

**CoF:** Did they approach you for THE NIGHT STALKER with you specifically in mind?

**BA:** I'm not sure how that came about. Someone may have suggested me to Dan ("Dark Shadows") Curran. I think he looked up my picture in the Academy directory. He



The original NIGHT STALKER: Barry Atwater (left) as the vampire who terrorized Las Vegas. Above: Carol Lyness and Darren McGavin.

was interested and called up my agent. I went to the studio, I brought some pictures with me and he looked at one shot I brought and he said, "That's it! That's the one!"

**CoF:** How did you feel about doing NIGHT STALKER? Was it hard for you to enter into the mood of playing a fiend, a vampire?

**BA:** No, not at all. We all have all sorts of feelings inside us; everybody. All we have to do is simply let go and the feeling comes out. That's what acting's about—just letting go, not suppressing or repressing or criticizing or censoring ourselves.

**CoF:** How did you go about preparing for your role as James Skerrett—the vampire? Did you stand in front of the mirror and decide on which facial expressions would be suitable?

**BA:** No, I cannot control that. I just let that happen.

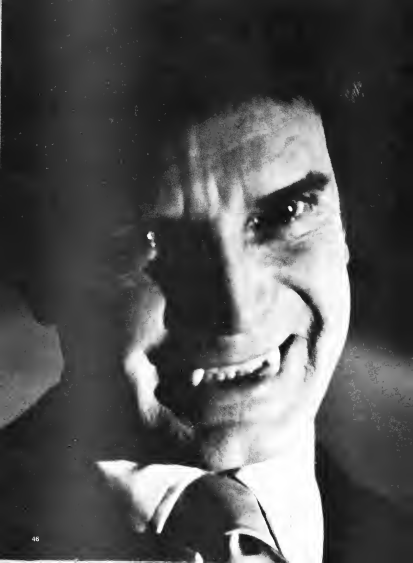
**CoF:** How did you feel about interpreting, about getting into the character?

**BA:** I felt he was very lonely. He has no

friends. He's all alone, so he doesn't talk to people. I'm sure he's not a happy man, but he's stuck. He's like a heroin addict; he's stuck. And I took that attitude. I've never taken heroin and never intend to, but what I heard about it is that a guy has to have it. If Skerrett didn't have blood, what would happen to him? It must be really hell not to have blood. So, I simply took the absolute necessity to have blood, and if I have to kill people, I'm "sorry." I don't want to kill anyone. I don't get kicks by killing people. I simply have to have it. And if people don't understand it, it's not my fault—and they chase me and they do awful things to me and they shoot bullets at me and I'm furious with them.

**CoF:** Do you regret not having any speaking lines?

**BA:** No, I was very glad—very, very glad there were no speaking lines. Because I think as soon as the vampire opens his mouth and starts to talk, he becomes an ordinary human



being an actor saying silly lines. And I think that was a brilliant idea of theirs not to have the vampire say a word.

**CoF:** But all of the biting and growling was dubbed.

**BA:** No, this is what happened: Sometimes when they shoot they use an Arriflex camera which makes a lot of noise. It's a hand-held camera. In the end, where the sunlight comes in and I try to go up the stairs and the sunlight hits me and finally I fall, and Koltchak tells me with a stake—all that was shot with an Arriflex which makes a terrible racket. So, all the noises had to be dubbed. We went into an adjacent sound stage and I tried to go through the business to make it as consistent as possible with the biting and the growling and the wailing to cover that sequence where they were using the noisy Arriflex camera.

**CoF:** You were the center of the most successful made-for-TV movie. To what do you attribute your personal effectiveness in *THE NIGHT STALKER*?

**BA:** That's due to the way it was photographed and the way it was cut. I'm not trying to give false modesty. I think if you like films it's important for you to know what it is in the film that makes you like it, so you can appreciate it all the more. There are a lot of things to watch in the film aside from the actors. You watch the way the shot's done—how it's cut, the camera angle. Those are the things in a film that can really be exciting as film. The way it was cut and edited together. In *THE NIGHT STALKER* you would be watching scene A and hearing the dialogue and sound from scene A. As you got to the end of that, we would suddenly hear the sound from scene B—then the visual would switch to scene B. This kind of overlapping—it would pull us through, rather than jerk, jerk, jerk like that. It would kind of ease us through into the next sequence and make the pacing go very much faster. It's a neat technique and it's exciting to watch. It feels good to watch.

**CoF:** Could you describe the general make-up they used on you?

**BA:** The eyebrows—little hairy scissors were used to cut out all the hair underneath here and then a lot of goop was put on them and they were brought out and tamed up on the ends. Full, complete contact lenses were used for the bloodshot part. There's a "mildly" bloodshot and a "heavily" bloodshot set, so there were two sets of contact lenses, and then the fangs and then a wig with black hair.

**CoF:** How was that sequence filmed where you're that man out the window on an upper floor?

**BA:** That was shot in the administration building of the Sam Goldwyn Studios and they replaced the window and used sugar for glass. They can make a pane out of sugar. It breaks, but it doesn't have very sharp, needle-like fractures. And they erected on the ground below a great big air pillow. It must have been maybe six feet high. It was inflated with blowers. And then the chairman made noise a running jump, dove through the window and landed and tumbled and landed as he fell three stories onto the cushion below. The window you see from the inside of the build-

ing was on a set. The outside was another building altogether.

**CoF:** You think it made a statement about society when the police forced Koltchak to get out of town?

**BA:** Sure it did, and it's a statement that I think most of us believe as being certainly possible. It's a weird thing. I just read a book called "Centennial" about the year 1876 and about the big centennial exposition in Philadelphia. And it was the second term of Ulysses S. Grant, who was a very sweet man—had no business ever being president. And the corruption was so thick throughout the whole government that it made me think, "Well... Washington's really nothing new. Why should we be so awfully uptight about it? It's been going on for at least a hundred years, or probably before that." But we want to believe the best of ourselves and the best of our country—about George Washington and the cherry tree and all that sort of stuff. So, when it does happen we're always sort of shocked and horrified. And yet, in *THE NIGHT STALKER*, with that undercurrent of corruption, it really didn't surprise me a heck of a lot.

**CoF:** I know *THE NIGHT STALKER* was a very serious drama, but between takes did you like to break the tension with some humor?

**BA:** No, not especially. I don't horse around on the set. If it's a comedy picture I will, because it keeps up the fun ambience. But if it's a serious film and I start to horse around or someone else starts to horse around, then this is bad, because it breaks the mood. You really have to keep that going, because it's very intense and it can slip away if you're not careful. You have to really concentrate before you go into the set to take your place, you walk from the dressing room to the set. And I have to say to myself, where am I, what am I doing—because I've gotten out of it. So I have to walk back into it. What do I need, what do I want, what values do I have, what do I care about, what do I dislike, what do I admire, hate, respect, and so on. The whole inside has to go.

**CoF:** If they re-made *DRACULA* and did it according to the book, do you have any ambition to portray the feroceous Count, the classic Vampire?

**BA:** No way, no way. Look, *DRACULA* was written in 1898. That style of presentation of a story is old hat for us now. We really know it's a classic when we see it. In the recent version with Palumbo, we've had it—we've really had it. So, we cannot go and keep doing that over and over and over again. Here's what happened: take *THE EXORCIST*—you see, that is where we are now—where *DRACULA* was when it came out with Lugosi in the early 30's, it scared the heck out of us, and so did the first *FRANKENSTEIN*. Now, today in 1974, it's *THE EXORCIST* that's scaring people and making them sick. We cannot go back from the level of *THE EXORCIST* in terms of story, of treatment, of action and honesty and candor. We're doing things, saying things and we're identifying things that we never did before. We are far more honest and candid a people than we ever were. I remember when sex movies started showing in theatres I couldn't believe it, because I was

brought up in Denver, Colorado in a very square, Republican, Protestant society. And all this stuff was where you wouldn't even think about it, much less talk about it. But we knew about it. Now we're all saying out loud what we're thinking in our heads. And I think this is marvelous. I think we're being honest and I think when we're honest we'll be healthy. When we start lying, then we get sick.

**CoF:** After advice would you give to someone who wants to become an actor, and would you recommend the profession?

**BA:** No. If you want to become an actor, nothing in God's will can keep you from becoming an actor. Nobody can recommend that you be or not be. If you want to be, you will be. You cannot help yourself. You will be, because you must be. You must be... or die. It occurred to me not long ago that acting is really an athletic activity and it wouldn't be far off to have acting as part of the Olympics because an actor really uses his body. You have to move. You have to feel. And I think one of the reasons athletes can make very good actors is because they already know how to move. They already know how to respond physically. If you can't do it physically you do it with words, but the words stand for a physical action. If I say, "Come here," what I'm really wanting to do is reach out and grab you and pull you here. So, I've simply used the words in place of an action; but I mean that action inside me when I say the words, and that's what turns it on—the meaning, the intention, I mean it... all of me means it.

**CoF:** Do you ever feel the urge to write, direct and produce a film on your own?

**BA:** Yes, I would like to do that. That's a very exciting medium. It's the most exciting for me. Kenneth Clark said in his *CIVILIZATION* that he felt that the most culturally representative aspect of this century would be the motion picture rather than architecture.

**CoF:** Do you ever think of the degree of immortality you achieve by having yourself recorded on film?

**BA:** What good does it do? When I'm dead, I'm dead.

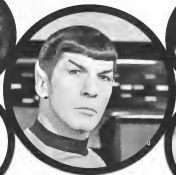
**THE NIGHT STALKER** made the above statement in Los Angeles, a little over two years after the first unofficial documentary report of his death was made public. So, Koltchak... beware!

Interviewed by Richard E. West, Jr.

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# STAR GAZING







A STAR TREK Album—George Takei (left) and Nichelle Nichols (right). Below: Leonard Nimoy, William Shatner and James Doohan.



DeForrest Kelley (left) and Walter Koenig (right). STAR TREK's spectacular syndicated success has made its rebirth certain: Gene Roddenberry has just lately announced a feature film version in the works and a new TV series is practically inevitable for around late 1966.



Carol Ohmert stars as Liza, one of the bizarre characters of Poe's phantasmagoric world in *SPECTRE OF EDGAR ALLAN POE*. Mohy Quandour wrote, produced and directed this Cintel Films presentation, originally intended for release by the now defunct Cinerama Releasing company but now being readied for distribution under American-International.



**THE TOWERING INFERNO:** Rescue helicopter and a breeches buoy are used to rescue people trapped by a catastrophic holocaust in the world's tallest skyscraper. Left: An explosion interrupts a battle between Richard Chamberlain and two hotel guests in a fight to commandeer the cable buoy.



ABC-TV's Wide World Special: THE WEREWOLF OF WOODSTOCK— he sold his howl for rock 'n' growl.

# FRANKENSTEIN at large



The following reviews are not necessarily CoP's final opinion or evaluation, and especially in the case of "Short Takes," do not preclude other assessments that may appear in forthcoming issues on the same title.

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## TELEVISION—1973-74

"Television reviewing is completely mine," says film critic Andrew Sarris, adding, "but television criticism is an exciting new area to explore because of its power to change our minds."

But who's to argue? Most TV movies are only superficial reworkings of the same material in apparently endless variations, a favorite being a family, or group of people setting out in a voyage, and arriving at an isolated area for a confrontation with an unknown force (MANEATER, TERROR ON THE BEACH). People have been trapped everywhere from elevators to islands (KILLDOZER) to lunar modules (HOUSTON, WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM). Clockwork commercials arrive at predictable intervals, forcing writers to distort their material to fit the beliefs of the media.

12,000 injuries and fatalities a year are used to fluorocarbon proppants in aerosol spray cans, battled freely on tv along with high salt content, cat food which causes kidney infections and usually death in male cats. Not content with the mere depiction of rape (CRY RAPE), kidnappings and murder (ISN'T IT SHOCKING?), MURDER AND THE COMPUTER, television is now literally killing pets and people in their homes.

The roots of this behavior were examined in "The Killer Instinct," (12/2/73) the debut of David Wolper's PRIMAL MAN series for ABC. Staged footage of prehistoric man was filmed in the Neahue Desert and then intercut with contemporary Stanford studies on aggression. John Chambers, of PLANET OF THE APES, devised the Neanderthal (Homo Erectus) mask for a tribe headed by actor James Brubaker. Alexander Savoyev, named. The second in the series, "The Battle for Domestica" (1/1/74), contrasted today's feminist movement with prehistory reenactments based on Elaine Morgan's controversial book, "The Descent of Woman." A haunting scene of a Panther stalking a beach, devouring the tribe into water, shared feminist consciousness and produced a cynical poetry interpreted by Rachel Welch and Barbra Streisand. Show number three, "The Struggle for Survival" (6/21/74) consisted of footage retrieved from a tragic March 13 airplane crash in which Prokhor, his son Robert and 29 other PRIMAL MAN cast and crew members died. The scenes of the past revealed through Prokhor's artificial name and the magic of

PRIMAL MAN's speculative fiction reconstruction technique has been equalled only by NBC's films of the hanged last Tuesday 1976 and the two-year quest through Brazil for the Karen Akrore Indians chronicled in the 1970 British documentary, THE TRIBE THAT HIDES FROM MAN, repeated frequently on PBS.

The season's other premiere peak was a "Halloween Ball of Fears" adaptation of Mary Norton's children's book, THE BORROWERS (12/14/73), repeated 12/14, the story of an eight-year-old boy (David Lonsdale) visiting a Victorian country house where he discovers a wee family, six inches high, living under the kitchen floorboards. With superior special effects and potent fantasy situations, it generated a response from both children and adults, perhaps the true test of "children's fantasy." Avoiding the broad acting approach indigenous to Sid and Marty Krofft productions and other Saturday morning fare, the climax seemed more akin to Richard Matheson. A vicious, snarling first snarl through passageways inside the walls where a maniacal Eddie Albert makes a last ditch stand to defend his household. The family escapes through a window grating to begin an awesome odyssey toward a new home, a scene with all the mystic portent of INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN's finale.

Bruce Paltrow, a Hellmark PR spokesman, says they have "never relinquished program control to a network or a producer, Good, bad or somewhere in between, whatever goes on the screen exemplifies Hellmark involvement from idea to script to production to director to casting to time period selection." In addition, they are practically unique in scheduling the advertising so it doesn't interfere with story.

Brian Moore's CATHOLICS (11/29/73) is set in a future time when monks on an island off the coast of Ireland have come in conflict with the church for saying Mass in Latin—defying papal prophecy, perhaps, for identical situations were reported on tv news in only a matter of weeks after the issue of the highly praised speculative drama, Catholic thriller, several shows, most notably ABC's Sunday morning DIRECTIONS (2/17/74). And, in this context, we might also note that NBC's Sunday run, INSIGHT series of religious dramas has often employed fantasy and sci-fi themes along with some fascinating offbeat casting.

Ritual inquiry was also part of NBC's IN SEARCH OF ANCIENT ASTRONAUTS. Considering the mass public interest in this subject, the thrust was stronger than the half-skeptical questions uttered by Rod Serling's narrators were replaced with flat statements of fact. Bantam's job was on "In Search of Ancient Mysteries," \$1.50 by producer

Landburg shows the fruits of much research glimpsed only superficially on tv, and it includes a Serling introduction.

WILD SCIENCE (4/26/74), with Peter Falk as on-camera narrator, examined folk medicine, body odors and the psychokinetic abilities of Uri Geller and others. So far, it apparently hasn't the courage to take on any serious examination of the claim by Geller and Dr. Andrei Pashin that Geller is in contact with extraterrestrials from the planet Hooon somewhere out in the vacuum (See Pashin's "Un," Doubleday and Co., May, 1974).

The intensity of the fall 1973 UFO flap and the evidence reviewed the Pentagon, Mississippi encounter with floating creatures spawned lengthy and serious talk show discussions (DICK CAVETT, DAVID SILVERMAN and MERV GRUFFIN) and coverage on NBC NIGHTLY NEWS. NBC's interest appeared more casual than usual, and the network was, in fact, much more intrigued than its audience ever knew. Affinity around the country were used to reply all local UFO tales to NYC. In October, 1973, executive producer Fred Freed, a seventeen Emmy winner set a budget of \$31,000 for an NBC WHITE PAPER study of the UFO reports coming in daily. A "strider face" hanging over the White House was eventually deemed more noteworthy, and thus important documentary, dispelling the alibi of THE INVADERS and the British series, UFO, did not appear until December of 1974. "Wild UFO's DO YOU BELIEVE?" it did present UFO's without ado. A Gallup poll (11/29/73) calculated that 51% of the American public believes UFO's are "something real." 60,000 UFO sightings have now been collected and computerized. In the U.S. alone there are about 1000 sightings a year.

Gene Roddenberry returned—with a vengeance. THE QUESTOR TAPES (11/27/74) and repeated later in the year) presented a super-robot (Robert Foxworth) with super-learning abilities. As acted and written the humor inherent in this characterization is even more engaging than Spock and multi-levels superior to the writers. "Faster than a locomotive" abilities of THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN, Roddenberry's PLANET EARTH (4/23/74) is a definite improvement over its precursor, the slow-paced GENESIS II. A sense of humor pervades along with many noticeable parallels and spinoffs of STAR TREK as an oddball team of pacifists travel the high-speed universe to a society where men are subhuman and women are "women's lib gone mad." "When's the last character? Enter the Kroogs—funny fauns heaven with reptilian ridges on their skulls. They tool around in George Metzger-styled steam cars dispensing wisdom whenever possible. As an extrapolative sure, a PLANET EARTH



Lee Majors' bionic powers evident in **THE \$6 MILLION DOLLAR MAN**. Is this an idol of the dreaded god, Chi-Ken-Itzcher?

weekly series has great potential, those constant tearjerkers of the *Enterprise* to vicious plots always seemed an "Algonquin" and an obvious usage of available studio sets.

Majors' features also turned up in **WONDER WOMAN** (3/12/74), an adaptation of psychologist William Moulton Marston's comic book creation, featuring an excellent updated and audacious portrayal by Cathy Lee Crosby. Paradise Island was deftly interpreted occasionally with its own music motif in a fashion not dissimilar from the *KUNG FU* Tarantula songs. The benefits of submissiveness, the "bustle," the invisible plane, Steve and other references created a feeling of familiarity to the original. Unfortunately, *Wonder Woman's* costume, which has undergone only minor changes in comic books during the past 33 years, was altered beyond recognition for this television.

ABC NEWS carried a fixed report on the hyper merchandising success of *Eiji Yashima's* **ULTRA MAN** in Japan, mentioning that it's "too violent" for American television. It's

available, however, through UA-TV.

#### PLANET OF THE APES (CBS-TV)

Save tv "excellence" is usually an accidental exception, it was painful to discover but hardly surprising to realize that **PLANET OF THE APES** (CBS-TV) was an ordinary as some series, if not worse. Dozens of kids we asked, though, loved the APES, makeup, costumes and all, so did many of their parents. Fact is, most homes have 2nd, even 3rd tv sets, leaving adults free to choose other programs at their wish. Thus it's plausible that APES was seen by a very vast audience, but since Nielsen "ratings" seem to court few youngsters, this system's efficacy and credibility appears open to question if it has the power to deem popular shows, such as APES and, of course, *STAR TREK*.

#### KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER

has a cozy pattern that's predictable but a pleasure. Each script is invested with a sense of cool, calculating humor to balance out assorted weekly monsters and other horrors

Kolchak may risk our outrage if he wipes out all existing weirdness and monstrosities off the face of the earth; but we've a feeling that even if they don't arise from the grave to haunt him, the Sci-Fi and Game shows will Ooohhh also to ABC-TV for being the most imaginative of all TV networks, saving KOLCHAK from poorer ratings by shifting its time schedule, doing the same to **SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN** (whose scripts seem to have expanded a bit in the past few weeks) and for offering a heavier diet of other imaginative programs.

—Marion Fox—

**SATAN'S TRIANGLE** (90 min., with commercials)—ABC-TV—1973L. Starring: William Read Woodfield, Dr. Stanton Riley. Cast: Kim Novak, Doug McClure, Alejandro Rey, Colas.

This sometimes spooky, more often stupid TV melodrama is essentially a haunted house tale which takes place aboard a boat, Kim Novak, looking just fine, is cast as a good time girl tugging with demons and inclement weather on a ghost ship in the Bermuda Triangle. Her fellow voyagers are a thoroughly bad lot: the captain's secretary, the first mate's a drunk who throws his capsize overboard. Her only company is a "spaceman" who'd rather reel in a statue than rescue a priest (Alejandro Rey) who's adrift off the starboard bow. And Kim's SOS only brings a hostile Coast Guard cutter, portrayed by Doug McClure. Their woes will be the death of these protagonists, for this is a moral tale. The Devil's at work here, we can tell by the weird electrical disturbances which cause the film print to go negative from time to time. In the so-called Triangle one cannot tell day from night. Or is that the fault of sloppy editing and shots that don't quite match? McClure does a personable job of acting, but Novak and Rey give no better performances than the play deserves. The script is dreary, incoherent bogs about mystical mishaps and religious symbolism. This is the most Roman Catholic thriller since *THE EXORCIST*. Producers of next week's presentation: *The Abduction of Miss Anne*. Have the Knights of Columbus taken charge of the Tuesday Movie of the Week?

—Paul Roen—

#### FILMS

#### SOME OF THE ALL-TIME "WORST"

Selected by

Mark Oser

You all remember Mackay Dolans of *THE MONKIES*, right? He stars in *NIGHT OF THE STRANGLER* (co-starring with Susan McGowan), and if you think he couldn't sing you may be right, and if you say he can't act, you'll be absolutely correct. Mack behaved like he wandered on the set, someone handed him a script and he said, "Eeky, it's a movie script!" and he started acting. The other thespians aren't any better and, perhaps, even worse. The confusing mystery as to who's killing off Mack's family? Could it be his brother (who is a proud Southern gentleman and also bigoted), or as if the partner who got fired? Surprise — it's the local Parish priest. He's not really a man of the cloth, but his brother was (both are black) and wanted to marry Mack's sister, but her bigoted brother was so terribly upset that he killed her for love. The local yokel "Look hyah, boy" police nab the Priest, but not until the entire family, including Macky, is killed. The audience's she killed... by boombox. The film was released by Horco, produced by Al Siler, written by



THE NEPTUNE FACTOR goes down on record among The All-Time Worst. Above: blow-up of a small golden intended to simulate a "fearful monster." Left: Yvette Mimieux and Ernest Borgnine.



William McLean).

ASYLUM OF SATAN is an unimpaired, sheep flock that has nothing going for it except for a twist ending. A girl wakes up in an asylum unaware of how she arrived there; and, of course, no one tells her, so she decides to snoop around. Finally, good Dr. Spector shows up and tells the girl she's there because she had a breakdown. Truth is, she's David's fodder for the next Satanic Sacrifice. To the rescue comes her boy friend, and the residents of the asylum's only three patients, some Satanic magic and a bumbling detective. All turns out well in the end, but only because the girl wasn't a virgin. Satan was about to ravage her beautiful body, when, suddenly, his mission (and the fact he's also an expert gynecologist) made him realize she wasn't "pure." Since it's not nice to fool Father Satan, Dr. Spector and his disciples go Puff. Now, if only the film would go Puff. Released by Studio 1, produced by J. Patrick Kelly, written and directed by William Gardner. Starring: Charles Kossuth, Nick Jilly and Carla Borrell.

—Mark Orer—

J.J. Milmare, and directed by Jay Noack.

WOMEN AND BLOODY TERROR (also released, produced and directed by the same people above) isn't a tale about lady vampires nor will you find any pretty things getting chased by aspartic weird ghosts. In fact, it's not even a horror flick—except in the sense that it is horrible. More in an S&M vein, it tells about a bored housewife and her nymphomaniac urge to burn sex. Eventually she does—with her daughter's boy friend, which of course makes her daughter mad. Amid all the banality and confusion, enter two nutty garage repairmen who kidnap men and daughter and proceed to rape them. It's all very smugly, boringly created. You've been warned, so—skip this.

DON'T LOOK IN THE BASEMENT aroused a lot of controversy for pulling out the stops for bad taste and "shocking" audiences. The drama unfolds and tells the tale of a pretty nurse who gets a job at an asylum, but discovers unspeakable events taking place there. While the idea isn't bad, the script lacks any originality whatsoever. And, the acting? Anyone with digital decency could achieve better results by having shadow shown on a wall, including any original obscene gestures that may come to mind. Everything in this flick is sophomoric, especially the "violence" (which the dear ad man tout) which is so overdone it's funny. For location freaks it was supposedly shot somewhere on Long Island, which doesn't say much for J.J. A rumor has it that the first director died during filming, watching the film you can see why. Released by Halmark, producer, Century 2000, directed by S.F. Browning (starring

switched channels to see something I'd missed and caught BEN (a cunning, undomestic little suspecter)—it's not hard to see why so many cut it down—it mixed in "less bits of horror" with facets of love instead of blatant violence and hatred, and, for some, this is unforgivable.

Perhaps it sounds unfair to put a show based only on 12 minutes. Comparing notes with others, I found that my out of eight friends switched away after five (1) to 15 minutes, I was hardly alone (the other two? One guy started bombing out over a bottle of eye and watched all 2 hours—stewed to the pills, the other guy videotaped it for "proof").

Besides David Wilson being the poorest choice possible for old Supt. who, choreography and overall ambience seemed on a high school or second-rate college level. Also lacking was the original version's destructibility and opening overture. And... imagination. Hey, whatever happened to it?

—Don Chang—

IT'S A BIRD, IT'S A PLANE, IT'S SUPERMAN (2 hrs. with commercials, —ABC-TV—Feb. 21, 1975).

Anyone who has bought the SUPERMAN (reel-to-reel) album from the 1966 Broadway production(s) might assume that the original stage version closed after a few performances because of opening at the time of a widespread NYC newspaper strike, some thing happened to many other productions each time something like this has occurred. The movie is often interesting and, at times, delightful, some of the lyrics are quite bad, but a few (as delineated by those in the original cast album) work well, especially the "mad scientist" bit and song belted out neatly and with gusto by Jack Canady. What you never learn by hearing the album is that several neat numbers and a little witty wordplay are all that exist out of a near-total disaster! Luckily, I

THE NEPTUNE FACTOR, a non-Ton watery sea-flier, gulches Ivan Tors' aquatic three-wastes seen miserably great by contrast because Tors' stuff, for one, is a lot shorter. FACTOR has the usual line-up of faces appearing these days in disaster/sea sight/pseudo-SF films: Ernie Borgnine, who looks a little too old for tough-guy assignments, Professor Walter Pidgeon, in the good old marine scientist, and Ben Gazzara, whose dynamic, adventuresome charisma almost makes one believe that the lousy plot and direction may yet improve.

Whatever in 20th-Fox ordered the money to produce the thing (and it looks fairly expensive) needs lots of help. As if watery adventures haven't been a drag on the market, it's hard getting a rise out of H2O. Developing momentum, conflict and drama from a cast submerged down below in flippers and scuba gear? How about watching re-runs of Lloyd Bridges in SEA HUNT... Like the man who,

if God had ordained Shakespeare, Kubrick or Orson Welles to work underwater, He'd have endowed them with fins and gills.

**FACTOR's** payoff shows several ways: The advertising—the large display posters make you think that huge underwater monsters threaten to chew up subs, all the ships at sea and mankind, instead, screened are huge blow-ups of small tame fish from a home-type aquarium. Running roughly two hours, the production suits so incredibly dull, you want to gag. As the theatre emptied, the audience seemed to be resting in unison—or probably at implosion.

—CTB—

## SFANTASY FILM NEWS

Hope your holidays were happier than those of the victims in **BLACK CHRISTMAS**, a blood-and-gore epic from Canadian Ambassador Films that stars Ker Dulan as a psycho killer. The Yule Season was peppered with other quaint gems along the same lines. Box office International released **THE SINFUL DWARF**, portrayed by Torben, a nasty cove wailing little fellow, who drags damsels and rears their heads out to perverted rona **TERROR CIRCUS** isn't any more cheering, with warped Andrew Price (of **SIMON, KING OF THE WITCHES** fame) torturing and slaughtering pretty girls in a radiation-contaminated barn near an abandoned nuclear testing site.

With **THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE** now a boxoffice success, we can look forward to **THREE ON A MEATHOOK**, which is advertised as "more brutal than a chainsaw massacre." And, finally, Wuxia has reached a new low for televisiveness with their disgusting shocker, **IT'S ALIVE!**, a charming tale that concerns a monstrous mutated baby who tears its way out of the womb and goes on a blood binge in search of milk. It stars John Ryan as the distressed papa, with Sharon Farrell, Andrew Duggan, Guy Stockwell, featuring the music of Bernard Hermann.

Reminiscent of **NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD** is the Spanish flick, **THE GHOST GALLEON**, a phantom ship that is found and explored by three couples who are set upon by the decaying corpses of the dead sailors. The creatures eliminate the women first, then go after the men. Climax is which the sole survivor thanks he has escaped to the safety of the beach as a real child.

And then there are the Black exploitation films as which the trend has turned from crime/detective dramas to the horror genre. **THE HOUSE ON SKULL MOUNTAIN** is a 20th Century-Fox release of a Chocolate Chipmunk Production. The dreary yarn is laced with voodoo and Satanic worship in a house where relatives of the deceased gather for the old familiar reading-of-the-will, only to be disposed of one by one. Then there's **BLACK EXORCIST** which in its advertising warns the audience that the producers are "not responsible to any person that the film may disturb either physically or mentally." Where have we heard that before? And with **BLACKENSTEIN** still awaiting release, we can also look forward to **THE BLACK RIPPER**.

**THE EXORCIST** has spawned a host of demon/witchcraft-type films. In addition to the already mentioned **BLACK EXORCIST**,

there is **BLACK MASS** which involves a policeman who seeks retribution for the death of his brother at the hand of a Satan group. **HELP ME... I'M POSSESSED**, stars Bill Gert. From Italy comes **THE WOMAN EXORCISED** and **THE GOD DEVIL**. Even Walt Disney will get on the bandwagon with **ESCAPE TO WITCH MOUNTAIN**, starring Donald Pleasence, Kim Richards and Ray Milland. Of course, let not either forget **THE EXORCIST**, a sex comedy from Capital Productions about a progressive encounter group.

Also from Capital: **BLOOD WATERS OF DR. Z**, about a mad scientist who desires to break with the system by turning into an underwater creature who goes on a blood-thirsty rampage. **BYRONSTON**, who have released **ANDY WARHOL'S FRANKENSTEIN** (and are about to do the same to Warhol's **DRACULA**) will soon distribute Sandy Howard's **THE DEVIL'S BABY**. Howard will also produce **EMBRIO**, the story of human life produced in a test tube, which will be filmed in Canada. **AIP** is readying for release **THE DAY THE WORLD ENDED** and sources every-one that it's completely unlike a film of the same title they released during the 1950's.

January marked the start of filming **SINBAD AT THE WORLD'S END**, the sequel to Ray Harryhausen's successful **THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD**. The screenplay will be written by Beverly Cross, based on Harryhausen's original story.

In a recent interview, Ray Harryhausen sadly declared that skyrocketing costs and inflation is now making "quality" SF/fantasy films prohibitively expensive to create. Now, he says, it takes an average of \$1.5 million alone just for the animation and preliminary special effects for one of his films.

Which, damn, doesn't possession and psychic phenomena are the in-themes these days, perhaps the most imaginative is **THE WEDNESDAY CHILDREN**, a rock musical that has a bunch of rap kids learning a magic spell from the Devil, enabling them to make all hostile go-wops in the world disappear. Wuxia is releasing **CRAZE** with Jack Palance as a lunatic antiquities dealer who seeks out immortal ladies for their blood to slake the thirst of his demon idol. While the plot is more than overly familiar, the film is worth-while if only for the prestigious cast that includes Trevor Howard, Edith Evans, Sary Kendall, Dana Dees, Julie Ege and Hugh Griffith. Cinema Release's **DARK PLACES** is perhaps the most disappointing entry in this group, in spite of the talents of Christopher Lee, Joan Collins and Herbert Lom. The slow-moving plot centers on Robert Hardy's search for an inheritance that is guarded by it's owner's ghost.

**IN SEARCH OF DRACULA** was screened last November at a kiddie-oriented "transient" convention in New York. This is the filmed version of Raymond McNally and Rado Ploren's documented biography of Vlad the Impaler, the true Dracula. Sure to report that while the 20 minutes screened contained magnificent Transylvanian scenery and interesting anecdotes, Chew Lee walked through his role as if he were participating in a school Xmas pageant. Perhaps the wimpiest portions of the film which had not been edited at the time will be more stirring.

There's a very promising British vampire film soon to be released, it's X-rated and deals with a couple of blood-sucking kabians. The current title, **VAMPIRES**, may be changed to **ONCE** stars Christopher Mitcham as Creation in an adaptation of the Adam-and-Eve tale. Also for the "over 21" set is **ANGEL NUMBER NINE**, a hard-core Women's Lib-danted flick that is the porno version of **GOODBYE CHARLIE**, wherein a male character dies and comes back to earth as a female to suffer the abuses he dealt out as a man.

On the lighter side is the U.S. made **HOMEBODIES** that effectively combines horror/comedy in relating the attempts of a group of madhouse senior citizens to save their retirement apartment building from demolition. Their number six: no violence in this Arco Embassy film, but it's very completely inside—it may be the "disuper" of the year.

Lana Turner, like Betty Davis, Joan Crawford, Gloria Grahame, et al., has joined the ranks of aging super star-turned-horror actresses in her role of the crazy mother in **PER SECUSSION**. Also starring are Ralph Bates and Trevor Howard.

Golden Screen Awards, presented by the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films, at their Second Annual Presentation, went to **THE EXORCIST** as Best horror film of 1973-74, **SOYLENT GREEN** as Best science fiction film, and **THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD** as the Best fantasy.

Good old William Castle is producing **THE HEPHAESTUS PLAGUE** in which foot-long cockroaches scurry out of the ground to trouble Man. Castle, famous for his exploitation gimmicks, such as the "death by fright" insurance policy of **MACABRE**, and the spook-meister glasses in **13 GHOSTS**, will out-gimmick himself in the cockroach flick by utilizing wind-tunnel wiper type devices under the seats to brush against your legs. And if the roaches don't put you, watch out for the super intelligent ants in **PLAGE IV**... they can hypnotize! What else? Boats! They're in a film called **THE SWARM**, from **POSEIDON ADVENTURE** producer Irwin Allen.

And speaking of **THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE**... well, why not—so let's mention one of the all-time, best thriller chiller flicks ever made... because you're going to see its sequel: the survivors from the original will be subjected to another test of their endurance when they are trapped in a train wreck in a tunnel under a mountain, in what's tentatively titled **BEYOND THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE**.

In addition to **EARTHQUAKE**, there's a deluge of Disaster Flicks underway... in case you haven't noticed—most notably represented by the current smash-hit **THE TOWERING INFERNO**, which is doing more for disaster soda consumption than Peter Sellers and Korean Wynn did for Coca-Cola in **DR. STRANGELOVE**. Besides two baggy-buster flicks, **AIRPORT 1975** and **THE HINDENBURG** (the latter about the famous dirigible, starring George C. Scott), there's a volcano disaster in **THE DAY THE WORLD ENDED**, and an avalanche disaster, **SNOWGLOBED**. Finally, earthquakes and tidal waves sink our Japanese friends in **THE SUBMERSSION OF JAPAN**.

Reminiscent of a fine Swedish film of some years ago called **THE DOLL**, there's a French-





CoF's own George Storer stars above as the prison chaplain who utters a final prayer for Dawn Diverport (Doris) in these scenes from John (Pink Flamingo) Water's new film, *FEMALE TROUBLE*. The reviews, so far, have been mixed, but the general critical reaction is tremendous enough to determine what many exhibitors have already learned: a sure-fire hit that surpasses *FLAMINGOS*' (already a heavy cult favorite) strange charisma and controversial appeal.



Carol Speed in high gear in her demonic metamorphosis in *ABBY*.

Spanish production called *GRANDEUR NATURE* (English translation: *Life Size*). Story concerns a man, Michel Piccoli, who falls in love with a life-size, life-size doll he's ordered from Japan. Piccoli's wife desperately competes with the plastic mistress, but is discarded by Piccoli who eventually marries the doll in this fantasy's finale.

Vietnam actor Forrest Tucker, star of *The Abominable Snowman* of the Himalayas, *The Crawling Eye* and *The Cosmic Monsters*, was recently interviewed while paying a visit in Baltimore, starring in the award-winning play, "That Championship Season," written by Aaron Miller (Father Karma in *THE EXORCIST*). During the interview many questions were asked of Forrest about these films, including his experiences of Peter Cushing, his co-star in *ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN*. The full interview (plus many other SF/fantasy topics) appears in *Black Opals* no. 8, available for \$6.95 from George Steiner, P.O. Box 10068, Baltimore, Md. 21204.

Over the past two years PINK FLAMINGOS has developed a phenomenal cult reputation throughout the world. In the wake of its success, director John Waters' Dreamland Productions is now releasing *FEMALE TROUBLE*. More "soft-core" and less violent than its predecessor, it reflects a lighter, slicker quality having cost more than twice as much as *FLAMINGOS*. *FEMALE TROUBLE* tells the story of a headline-seeking criminal named Duane Davenport (played by Divine) whose life is traced from her teenage years in an obscure suburban town to her untimely death in the electric chair. Beaudine Divine, featured are such John Waters veterans as David Leach, Mary Vivian Pearce, Mark Steale and Judith Massey. Also featured is Castle of Frankenstein's own George Steiner

making his film debut as the prison chaplain who walks that long, last mile to the electric chair with Duane Davenport during the film's conclusion (see several of these scenes elsewhere in the dept).

—George Steiner and John Purvess

## SHORT TAKES

**ABBY** (91 min.—AEP—1974/75) Probably best imitation spoof of *EXORCIST*, carries a few novel twists of its own, shirking Freudian's subtle creative ambiguities for a more direct "fight to the finish" approach. William (BLACULA) Marshall is excellent in his role as the exorcist minister who finds more to be expected in the devil-possessed Abby, a violent, murderous, vomit-spewing terror. Dir. by William Gendler. Carol Speed. Color.

**CHINATOWN** (121 min.—Columbia—1974). Roman Polanski has directed one of the best films of this or any year. Jack Nicholson's role as a 30's private-eye, who is enmeshed in a more complex "civic" than he bargained for, dominates most of the story and is in itself a brilliant performance in its own right. It's a unique and rare combination of directorial ingenuity and star presence, and may bring back to the screen "star vehicle" charisma, almost nonexistent more than ten years. Excellent performances also from Faye Dunaway, and from John Huston whose own directorial triumph, *THE MALTESE FALCON*, is now surpassed in this case. Brilliant camerawork, editing, and direction from supporting cast (Polanski in a sassy cameo à la Elia Kazan Jr.). Color.

**FLESH GORDON** (82 min.—Matterhorn—

1974). Very soft-core, semi-porn takeoff on the Bambi Chubby FLASH of the 30's, his supposedly excellent spot fix, testimony from talent that could eventually vie for the Harryhausen throne with more experience. Story, unfortunately, lacks much of the wit and intelligence of its costume, color and effects. Worth one good look, though, and of special interest to sensitive freaks. Dir. by Howard Zehin. Jesse Williams, Suzanne Fields. Color.

## ISLAND AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD

(93 min.—Buena Vista—1974). Colorful, action-filled "period" Slattery with a Jules Verne touch. In 1907 wealthy Englishman Donald Sinden and his friend, David Harman, set off in a unique dirigible on an Arctic expedition in search of his son. They find the youth in a "lost world" surroundings inhabited by a lost race of Vikings who look wild and tough enough to eat metal. Dir. by Robert Stevenson. Jacques Nares, David Gellman, Agnes Eckert. Color.

## THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN

(165 min.—UA—1974). Fine, okay super-thriller, but Bond series shows weaknesses and symptoms of losing momentum-appeal with each new addition. Though Roger Moore is one of the best (proved in his great stint several years ago in *The Man Who Haunted Himself*), he can't equal original. 007 Sean Connery's ability to combine righteousness/ruthlessness with dapper manners and romantic warmth. But, must come back to see Chris Lee making it big for a change in multi-million bucks production as the key maniac out to "get" Bond. Dir. by Guy Hamilton. Hervé Villechaze, Britt Ekland, Maud Adams. Color.

## AIRPORT 1975

(106 min.—UA—1974). Should've been made in 1964. Dumb time-waster badly directed by what the best, Jack Smight. Cui wailed. Chastin Reagan, Glenn Swenson, Myrna Loy, Karen Black. Color.

## AMERICAN GRAFFITI

(116 min.—UA—1973). An instant classic, shouldn't be missed on any coast. Historically successful recapturing of "the way it was" around late 50's-early 60's; dynamic example of film editing-directing at its very top best. Dir. by George Lucas. Color.

## CHOSEN SURVIVORS

(99 min.—Col.—1974). Does ya you don't need makes you feel "at home" . . . wedding TV. But knock off group of people deep beneath the earth. They missed the director, Sallie Reley. Read Hoffman, Jackie Cooper, Alex Cord. Color.

## DON'T LOOK NOW

(110 min.—Pr.—1973). In recent horror-crazed. Another "instant classic," in many ways greater than *THE EXORCIST*'s feeling for terror and the surreal. Not to be missed at any cost! Dir. by Nicolas Roeg. Donald Sutherland, Julie Christie. Color.

## MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS

(127 min.—Pr.—1974). Like *CHINATOWN*, excellent recreation of a nostalgic "bygone" era succeeds because of "how" generation is right-bredlight. Great cast, production values and direction by Sidney Lumet. Sean Connery, Richard Widmark, Albert Finney, Vanessa Redgrave, and many others. Color.

## THE SAVAGE IS LOOSE

(114 min.—Campbell Brown—1974). George C. Scott stars in own film, bravely distributed by him as an effort to prove creative people can or should try to benefit from free Establishment film distribution practices. It's scaring hell out of sweat in the industry. Well-made film treats on sensitive motherhood Oedipus question with intelligence and taste. Trish Van Deven. Color.

(Continued from page 4)

time "behind the scenes," pull back the curtain of mystery, and reveal:

#### CRITICAL MOMENTS IN FILM CRITIC-HIRING HISTORY

Beginning with how that notorious and well-dubbed reviewer, *Jed Leiland*, originally got his job:

"Look, Jed—old Becker's had another scene again. Besides, he's been hitting the bottle and screwing several too much lately. How's about dropping funeral and open events and taking over the movie column?"

Jed Leiland couldn't believe his ears for a moment. "No offense, Charlie, but if it means not reviewing any more open starring your wife—yes, anything's better than that!"

Charlie Kane groined broadly, little realizing that Jed would be some day Dr. Anton Probus' worst enemy.

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How a certain even more dubbed, widely misquoted reviewer got the job:

"Say, Harriet, how long have you handled the daily sewing and heartache column?"

Adjusting her poorly padded bra underneath her rumpage size dress, she answered, "Oh, I guess maybe ten or twelve years. Why?"

"What d'ya know about movie pickings?"

The cheap mass glare from the huge Kotex up above the street glared through the window, giving her acne-scarred face a weird reddish tint. She pondered a moment, pushing a stray wisp of mossy-brown hair behind a cauliflower ear.

"What do I know about films? Well, I thought H.G. Wells looked great in CITIZEN KANE. Loved Clark Gable in HOUSE OF THE SEVEN USHERS. Zsa Zsa Gabor looked terrific in MOOLAH ROUGE. And for real in-depth film analyses, I rely on MAD magazine."

Editor Darkhorse rose in elation, putting down his bottle of Smokey Pete. "Normally I can't stand sophisticated snobs, but I'll make an exception in your case, kid. The job's yours!"

Harriet Danzick was so delighted over her boss's reaction, she accidentally chewed her copy of MS instead of her bologna sandwich, then nearly jumped from her trainee shoes, tearing off her shirt, black socks (the ones with gold clocks) in sheer ecstasy.

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*THE VILLAGE VOID*, where they were interviewing *Yasuhiko Mookai* as special interview reviewer of the sub-underground filmmaking enterprise:

"Kib— we wanna know in the intellectual sections— er, I mean, the learned-type readers. We wanna make money. So, whaddya know 'bout films?" Y'know, the words kind with all them dirty scenes whose the fags, checks and creeps make out— huh, heh..."

As usual, Yasuhiko smiled his best condescending smile, trying to act cool and not too obvious about holding in his hand the latest issue of his own mag, *Film Palace*, but he did try self-confident, inspired after reading Brooks D'Offici's latest commercially acceptable art establishment comic strip.

"I know much about true film art. I know that 'good' film is bad, and bad film is good— especially when I and my friends have

created the great little Z-budget films that others in the outside world loathe with a passion. I also know that the N.Y. Film Festival will remain a mean, dumb little clique until they agree to show our beautiful experimental film masterpieces on the hewn Lincoln Center screen. And, my friends to them, and, too long they've ignored me, and guess who? Mr. Stanley, Kenneth Lee and Jake Jettokoff. They shall only earn our respect once they've acclaimed our masterpieces like GUNS OF THE CRABGRASS, FLAMING MONSTERS and REDDUBS IN THE PAD. Hollywood must also agree by granting a special Oscar to Tador Mard for his acting and direction of *OUT OF THE CLOSET*."

"Art is for art's sake. By the way, how much can you pay me?"

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*THE VILLAGE VOID*, when it was interviewing Andrew Sorrow— famous today for his over-the-top column, "Sorrow's Kinship Number":

Sorrow: I am profoundly struck over the opportunity of utilizing my personal sensibility in evaluating the cinema. Appropriately of my filmic preparations, allow me to prefer a sample of my valuable verbiage:

Jean-Luc Godard, Truffaut and Franja, May be hard to divine if you're born

Turbidly,  
But man-a-see, film grammar and genre-a-see  
Will enable you to feel you're in the same league with Voltaire.

V Food paludator:

Hey, wouldn't you know it,  
You're also a poet!

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Trying to get hard by *CASTLE OF FRANKENSTEIN*:

"I'd really love doing *SpantaFilm* reviews for you, Mr. Beck. But, honestly, I fail to see the connection between the genre, Rockefellers, Nixon, Ford and the System!"

CTB: "Don't worry yourself about that. We can't all be perfect at first!"

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See you next issue.

— CTB —



(Continued from page 4)

#### JAPANESE SPANTASY

Dear CTB— Here's some exciting news about three new Japanese, live-action TV shows.

The first is KIKAIQAA, which concerns a Japanese android, Kikaido. He was built by a Dr. Komoro, a captive scientist under a ruthless man called Gii who, in turn, heads a secret organization bent on conquering the world.

He holds the scientist captive so he can produce a whole army of androids with individual super-powers (such as the villainous Rinsu, discussed in the first episode). Dr. Komoro, however, has worked in secret to build Kikaido, an android with conscience programmed into him. Now, Kikaido is mankind's only hope against the evil organization. Kikaido's alter ego is Jiro, a pop-rock singer who always carries a guitar slung down his back. But when he changes to Kikaido, his human features transform into a head half metal on the right side, while his left side is transparent, showing the gears and cogs within. To combat his foes, he uses super-strength and the power of flight.

The next show is KINKYU SHIRI, which, translated, is EMERGENCY COMMAND. It involves a team of men and women, in Black Ranger-type helmets, who encounter anything from a murderous reptilian creature to extraterrestrial energy forces. The team consists of Miki, a brilliant scientist and the Captain who heads the group. Second in command is Chief Iwaki (who looks a lot like Cowboy Jones of "The Moonies"). Then there's Ippai who provides the comedy relief. And the girls, Serise and Nami. The different episodes are all exciting, such as the fifth one for example: about extraterrestrials who come into people's lives to test S-Fantasy humor?

The German interview was good, but it strayed too far from his best horror films. And, interviews in CoF are always interesting to read, but when in bikies are you going to interview Dan Curtis? I was annoyed when CoF didn't review HOUSE OF DARK SHADOWS, which I consider to be the best horror flick of 1970, if not of all time.

"Frankenstein At Large" is great and a disappointment. I can really get into your ratings and comments are invaluable. CoF is going to give its competitors a scare by appearing more frequently. But I dislike Warner's MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES might give you a run for the money. You should continue paying more attention to recent S-Fantasy products and less emphasis on the past. Also, more multiple film reviews (especially if there's on recent releases) and on the CoF Gallery, also, in comic books, comic as well as black and white horror magazines.

Finally, CoF should run a poll on the best new S-Fantasy horror films of the year, including made-for-TV movies. A monster "vampire" (which is the worst fantasy publication on the open market) carried something like this, but it was grossly handled, session of a boy and a girl, making them vampires.

The third show is RAINBOW MAN. Although also a half-hour show, it lacks the transcendental sub-traits which the above two have. The one's about a super-hero, Takeshi, a young soldier who's shot by traitorous comrades, but has his life miraculously restored by a Shizum type character. Under the guru's training, Takeshi gains astounding powers: he can shoot off fire or water from his fingertips, has the power to generate tornadoes, winds, etc. For each power, he wears a different cap. Those who view R-Man may think it's juvenile, and in some cases I'd agree, but I consider it better than *Rever's SUPERMAN* and the awful copycat BATMAN with Adam West. If anything, RAINBOW MAN offers fans a wide variety of costumes and super-powers.

Incidentally, I need any info or material that may be offered for sale from the films. THE VAPOR MAN and the super-hero film, THE GOLDEN BAT. I'd appreciate anyone writing me.

Masa Kuro, P.O. Box 642, Kapa, Hawaii, Hawaii 96746.

# MEN'S LIB & THE EXORCIST

Dear CTB: Although I continue maintaining active interest in the fantasy, horror or otherwise, the less excited buying other periodicals that we with years in the same genre. There's really no need of my going into the reasons for my not following your competitors since it's self-evident to others as far as unimpressive quality shows.

I find of particular value your awareness of an ever changing world out there (one that's sometimes more frightening than any imagination can come up with), but I'm afraid that I must take slight issue with you on a single matter.

In your "Frankenstein TV Movie Guide" under your otherwise well put review of PSYCHIC, you mention Men's Librarian as not being in existence at this time. I hate to disagree, but it's already more than 30 years, although from what you inferred in your writing, you would rather it be counter to Women's Lib, correct me if I am wrong. As a person enthusiastically involved with it, I am very aware of its appearance in answer to the many important questions raised by both the feminist and gay activist movements as to the problems of "heterosexuality" and the restrictive cult of machineness.

I am afraid castration complexes in the Men's Lib Movement hold the same place as penis envy does in the Women's contingent. Strength of any cult should not be the any human quality of positivity should not be categorized or qualified by what one has between their legs.

Of course, the world of entertainment—fantasy still remains largely sexist, as obvious in THE EXORCIST: it would not be so shocking if a boy committed masturbation with a crucifix, but girls aren't supposed to be "aggressively" sexual, according to religion and establishment values. I wonder if your readers are at all aware of this?

Leonard Tinsdale, 29 E. Van Dem St., Saratoga Springs, N.Y. 12866.

Nothing "toaster" any humanitarian activist movement could ever be implied by me. Further, what I'm afraid of is that many of the basically noble causes which have grown in recent years have shown grave tendencies of insularity—or, at least as far as some of their most outspoken representatives sound, tendencies and viewpoints of monolithism that resemble many Soviet attributes that they (for very valid reasons, of course) want obliterated or removed. Unfortunately, too many of the most vocal activists behave about as repressive as society's repressors. Whether or not deep-seated provincialism or wilfulness is at fault, the shorts are often aimed at bad targets. In the case of Women's Lib—there's sometimes a feeling that their complaints emerge as antagonistic, even vengeful, against men rather than against social out rages and deterioration that both sexes have had a hand in creating. Fortunately, this form of myopia, though prevalent, isn't policy nor very widespread. But what many of us would like is recognition of the following facts:

No "movement" is an island unto itself. Just because certain segments of society are without representation and bear no "label" isn't indicative that they do not bear similar woes and agonies. Yet little if anything is being said about a Men's Lib which would focus attention on such facts as men being the jack-of-all and bearing the brunt of the social hassles expatriating them 24 hours a day, dying off like flies at a much earlier age because of such "pretenses" having whole careers and professions cut short, raped etc. due to age discrimination (partly because of a pseudo Youth Cult that permits exploitation of the young. And... let's not forget paternalism although either Rapprochement of a wife and family should never be mistaken period and insisted as an instrument to take

away nearly all that a husband has worked hard to create. There are, after all, thousands on both sides—yet I just recently shook when a lady actress expressed the idea that, in practically all cases of family incompatibility, the real holder "must" be the man, "never" the woman.—CTB

## CORRECTIONS & SHORT TAKES

Dear CTB: In CoP 21 (pg 43), your first sentence concerning DIMENSION FIVE says "Just previously reviewed in CoP" Well, you quoted. If you would turn to page 63 of CoP 12, you'll find a review of the same film. Granted, something is missing in Dimension (it's the theme—CDB.) I'll see you review it at 91 min., and made by Lindsay B., while the other has it running 78 min. and made by Paramount. Since both refer to the same year, CDB, etc., they almost have to be the same film. So what's the story?

Bill Roberts, 313 W. Wilminton, Norlan, Kan. 67554.

—Story is that the moving reporter who did the last thing went according to the plot he saw in the Foo Kw Pagoda Palace in Sak Lo Outer Mongolia. Actually, mistakes like this occur when, a) a staffer can't read their own thousands of letters, thus, b) reports to what he thinks is the "latest" info—meaning that the last info listed the most current cut-down or expanded proof. (Under is the cutoff that made the film. But, is the distribution. Sometimes full distrib info is available or overlooked, that's rare, but does happen.—CTB

Dear CTB: Back in CoP 21 you listed THE RESURRECTION OF ZACHARY WHEELER.

and stated you had incomplete production info. Well, I have a one sheet poster from the film and thought you might like to have the rest of the credits for this interesting sci-fi film. Besides the cast listed with a synopsis in CoP 14, the film was produced by Robert Shuler, directed by Bob Wyre, written by Jay Simms and Tom Roff. It's a Madison Productions, Inc. release and was distributed by Gold Key Entertainment.

Carl Del Vecchio, c/o, American Film Collecting Club, 174 Hackensack St., Hoboken, N.J. 07030.

—Not trying to get ourselves off the hook, but exemplifying the accountants—accountant or bookkeeper— that may arise in running down film data... a current, long running "film guide" is riddled with such errors, and also lists WHEELER as a "made-for-TV" movie. Also lists CURSE OF THE DEMON as "av-f." The writer it also appeared to be a buff. Tak, tak, Well, who the hell is perfect?—CTB.

Various technical problems have thrown us off schedule temporarily. Sorry. Also, the Leonard NIMOY interview is now ready about for an upcoming issue, together with a number of very important related features.

Tell me issue. Peace.— Col Beck

Send all CoP letter columns mail to

Letters, c/o GOTHIC CASTLE  
509 Fifth Ave.  
New York, N.Y. 10017

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# castle of frankenstein's Back Issue Dept.



#9—Exclusive question-and-answer with interview with Boris Karloff; author review of ABC TV's *BATMAN*, with the debut in full color; lengthy biography Lord Duns of the last Doctor by Robert C. Brown, complete Robert's biography of contemporary villain Victor Frankenstein; reviews of *INDEX* and *WANDERLUST* (both 1977 and 1984); cartoons, two California columns, cover age of Germany's horror film review, TV Movieguide 8, and a column Barbara Steele, JACK THE RIPPER, SIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN, uncolored special Mike Perry reports on The Tennessee State Fair, *BATMAN* book cover.



#10—Early Brown reveals the True Facts Behind Boris' Lucien's Dragon Drag Addition, first part of lengthy interview with Christy Lee, the story of a real KING KONG, interview with Lee Cherry re: reviews of *BATMAN*, *TRICK AND THE DAMNED* and *CURSE OF THE FLY*, picture story on THE ADVENTURES OF BAT PRINCE AND BOO, Frankenstein TV Movieguide 9 and H. Seltzer, book reviews, biography of Col. Jack and Lt. Carter (W.D. Egan's The Spirit, feature reviews by Mike Perry, full color book cover by famed fantasy director Norman Rock.



#11—Hundreds of facts in the Star Trek Series: Money on Space, Star Trek Forever, An Indebtedness by Col. Beck, Science Doc. Earth by William Shuman, Ray Thomas and Susan Whitman, Col. Interview: Christopher Lee (part two), Col. Reviews on Hammer Studios: Gerald Philby covers THE WERDOR CHAMBER OF DR. RAJIBS and goes to tell about in 1984. Nostalgia, taking drinks of both for San Francisco, The Man Behind the Camera: Reviews on Marvel's monthly Jan. Dracula, cartoon: Chamber of Rick Perry, Col. Beck reviews THE WERDOR OF MANCHU, Frankenstein Movieguide book begins with "I" and "J," a look at Campbell's Reviews: Lt. Carter comes on 1984: The Year in Horror-Fantasy Books, full credits on "Mally" Willie's Wizard, full color book cover by Norman Rock, suitable for reading, Publisher's Note: Reviews.



#12—World of Comic Books: The, by now, famous LEE review, summary: Book of Marvel, and Chits of Hammer, etc. for the 2nd and 3rd part of the interview, Brock Brown's top SMASH GORDON comic strip series, the longest COMIC STRIP series strip thriller, a musical and ending by CIB on FANTASY WORLD, BILLY RATHBONE. May tells it like it is in SPOOK, SLACK, MURDER and RICH in THE WERDOR, one Movieguide 10, list, CIB on 3000000000 and PLANET OF THE APES (review), with exclusive Frankenstein reviews, first appearance of Col's official Col. Beck Column: Don Bates and Lie Carter look at Clancy's Job: An Obsessed Wizard of the Horror Film: Look many other (Frankenstein), a look at career of Jack's FANTASTIC VIOLENCE, letters, great photos & Titles & the vocal problem here.



No. 13—Special All-Star Issue "2001: A Space Odyssey" analysis/review, interview with RAY BRADBURY, "Planet of the APES Returns" exclusive: actor facts, etc. revealed for this time!, BASIL RATHBONE interviewed For Last Time, Jon after FRID profile, coverage & Date on ROSEMARY'S BABY, SARGARELLA, etc., "CARMAK" comic: gaffe in the inevitable Col. manner, "TV Of Not TV" (what is a question?), RAQUEL WELCH.



No. 14—KARLOFF SPECIAL: "Tribute to a Karloff," "My Life As a Monster" by Karloff HORROR FILM HISTORY: Part One: RAY BRADBURY interview, etc.; CARMAK by George, etc.; conclusions by STANLEY GREEN; THE ILLUSTRATED MAN, books reviewed by LIN CARTER; FRANKENSTEIN MUST BE DESTROYED: photos from WIZARD OF OZ, GWANGI, etc.



No. 15—HISTORY OF HORROR FILMS: Part 21: MARCONE reviewed: KARLOFF & HIS LEGACY; THE OBLONG BOX, with Vincent Price, reviewed: review of VAMPIRE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA with Chris Lee, Mind Blowing Comics: LITTLE NEMO—SMASH GOOGLI, MEN BEHIND THE COMICS: Frank Brunner; BE-NEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES: 3 different CRUISES, THE WITCHES BREW" fact article on forgotten curms and medicine; HEADLORD, BOOK, REVIEWS, ad infitum.



No. 16 Part 2: ROBERT BLOCH interview—WILLY DINGDAURS, etc.; ROBERT BLOCH's interview—ODRIAN GRAY; and and present—THE VAMPIRE, etc.; Part 4: a collection of HISTORY OF HORROR FILMS—radio reviews: Two "1984" comic: 1984's OR JEVYLL & MR. HYDE and MYSTERY OF THE WALK, etc.; Horror comic: BRILL WRIGHT's A CASE OF CONSCIENCE—Col. ADVE-QUE: more than 83 comic: Spantay Ribs—Pss. Letters, Head-Heads, etc., etc., etc., etc.

castle of frankenstein's **Back Issue Dept.**



## No. 17

ROBERT BLOCH interview  
(1/2, confusion) — RONDO  
HATTON: career article of  
25 distinguished Horror Stars  
in 1940s (part 1) — FILMMAK-  
ERS IN THE FANTASY FILM  
— Review of an unusual  
— Kitchy, but less as shadow,  
THE MACHINERY OF  
— FRANKENSTEIN Capsule  
Reviews of more than 20  
current titles — Plus:  
THE BURGERS — CITY OF  
THE CRIMINAL CULT — Santa  
Burger — Spooky Film  
News in death — Comix,  
Graphic Novels, short, another  
UNUSUAL — No short, another



## No. 19

**EXCURSIVE CARRIAGE**  
by **SAUL LOEB** — One of the  
KARLOFF'S last films, **CAUL-  
DRON OF BLOOD**. Offered  
synopsis and analysis of a great  
Horror Chiller: **NIGHT OF THE  
LIVING DEAD**. — An essay  
review of the works of **M.P.  
LOVECRAFT**, with scenes of  
his inspired mad genius.  
**The Shadow of the Night**  
**Hunted House**, **The Greenback  
Horror**. — Andrejewsky's ter-  
rifying horror fantasy, **EL TOFO**.  
— A look at **TALES FROM  
THE CRYPT** and what made  
it tick instead of tick.  
— And more than 28 other  
SF/F/H/Thriller reviews. DEUS  
Network by Nest Adams,  
Berkley, New Rochelle, Ken  
Bart, etc.



## Sl. 10

The World of Ray HAR  
RYHAUSEN (part 2), includ-  
ing from MIGHTY JOE  
BLONDE, \$6 MILLION  
WALL TO WALL IN THE  
MIDDLE FROM \$50,000 TO \$1  
TOMS, 7th VOYAGE OF SIN-  
BAD, etc., etc. — Analysis and  
review of RHYHAUSEN'S A CLOCK-  
WORK ORANGE — All about  
SILENT BURNING, an inter-  
view with director Douglas  
Trumbull — A HAMMERFUL  
YEAR... DRACULA A.D.  
COUNTES DRACULA;  
VAMPIRE VAMPIRE THING  
OF EVIL; BLOOD PITS THE  
MUMMY'S TOMBHANE  
OF THE RIPPER, Dr. JEKYLL  
& SISTER HYDE — The "M"  
list (pt. 2) — CoE Price advance



11. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 2000; 283: 2686-2692.

**No. 2** & conclusion of World of HARBETHAUSING, Inc., Argentina, Mysteries 1980, 2000, In the Moon, One Million BC, Valley of the Gwines, etc. This article featured by Vlado and Roderic of Blood - Scramble Sam - Grid at The Vampire - Sorcery Green - TV Movieguide, with the complete "H" listing. Includes: "The Vampire" At Large, Also: Palm Line, Poster Department, and other great nuggets, letters section, business reviews, scores of new releases, and more. Rating on the CD as B72.



## No. 21

[illegible]

## No. 23

**ALL ABOUT THE EXORCIST**  
and how it got there: 1—Director  
**BILL FRIEDMAN** TALKS about  
filmmaking and reveals behind  
the scenes facts; 2—Friedman  
on a controversial coffee break; the  
word **COP**; 3—FIVE different  
psychological analysts; 4—A  
chronicle of all fate and **The**  
**CURSE** that has haunted the  
film to date; 5—**INTERVIEWS**  
with Vincent Price, Peter  
Cushing (where he tells about all  
his experiences in a lengthy  
discussion), **MIKKIS KASSA**, the  
composer for 1939's **Thief** of  
Paris, **Golden Vamp** and the cur-  
rent **Queen of Hell** **Frankie  
Rae**, **Legend of Hell House**,  
**Barbara** **Musulas** and a nude  
jack at **Introd P.T.T.**



## No. 37

**PLANET OF THE APES** SPE-  
CIAL: All about the 5 theatrical  
releases, background info  
on CBS TV's series—add a  
biographical interview with  
Romeo D. Moreau—21 story  
pics. **EDUC. A VAGABOND:** The  
Pulps and George PAL's film  
version.—Part One of the  
Roper CORMAN interview.  
A look at JEAN-LOUC GODDARD's  
10-film masterpiece, **ADPH-  
VILLE—FINDOON** ana-  
lyzes and revisits took at a  
50's masterpiece. Roper Cor-  
man's **NOT OF THIS EARTH**.  
Foundation At Large  
reviews of new films. 50 car-  
toons and 100+ Sci-Fi story  
books. Plus casts, letter &  
The Water Gull Festival.



11

**NO. 24**  
CoP's Special Memorial  
Tribute, to the King of the  
Hemlock: **BORIS KARLOFF**  
Including Karloff's final  
major interview, conducted  
by CoP's editors

**THE EXERCIST II & Linda  
BLAIR**—Continuation of the  
**ROGER CORMAN** interview.  
Section on **HAMMER'S Roy  
Adrian**, the madcap master,  
and **THE EVIL OF FRANK-  
ENSTEIN**...—1932's controver-  
sial **MONSTER BREAKS** compared to  
the 1930s...—**Hewaters** and the  
"Mystery" of **at Trep**'s \$25,000  
**MONSTER Frustration**  
**At Large**, film and TV books  
and maps, and inaugurating a  
new call on **Steve Maves**, film  
letters palooka & other plebs



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This space is reserved—for a future issue, that is. Coming up next issue: Conclusion of GEORGE PAL'S SFANTASY WORLD. Plus: a great Surprise SFantaFilm package too, too mind-boggling for revelation.



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